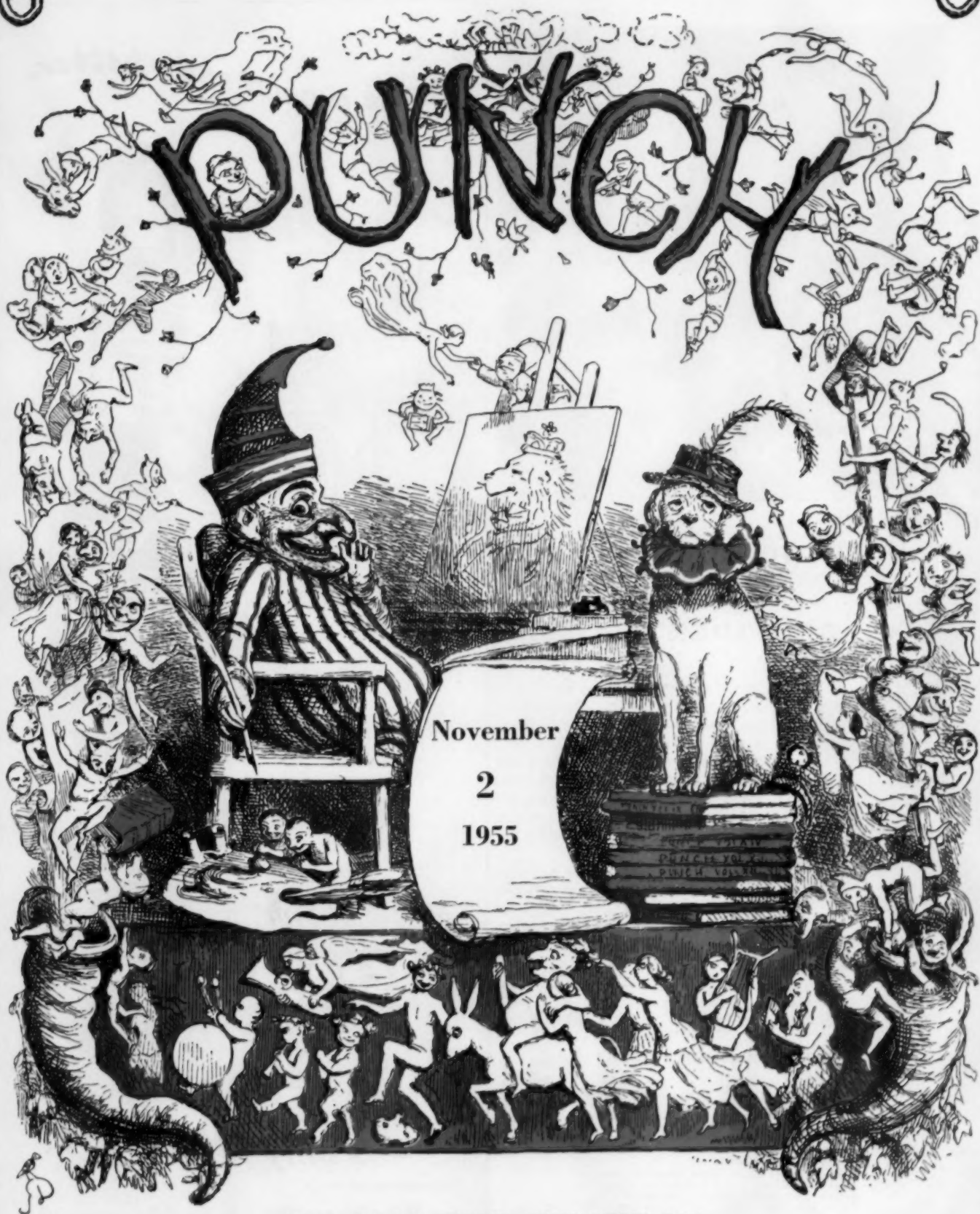


6^d

PUNCH or The London Charivari—November 2 1955

6^d

PUNCH OFFICE 10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E. C. 4.



WHO DOUBTS THESE CONFIDENT EYES?



This label PROVES
Ferodo Anti-Fade Linings
have been fitted.

Expert advice on brakes
MAY SAVE LIFE—MUST SAVE MONEY

See your garage about

FERODO

* **ANTI-FADE Brake Linings**

* WHAT IS BRAKE FADE?

Known to racing men for years, "Fade" is a form of sudden loss of efficiency in brakes after a period of overwork. Your safety, like the racing driver's, lies in Ferodo Anti-Fade Linings—and in giving your garage man a chance to keep a check on your brakes for you.

FERODO LIMITED • CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH A Member of the Turner & Newall Organisation

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Choose
BOOTH'S
DRY GIN

There is only ONE best!

MAXIMUM PRICES IN U.K.

Bottle 34/6 • Half Bottle 18/- • Qtr. Bottle 9/5 • Miniature 3/8



This man is **NEWS**

The staff of Cable & Wireless Limited is indeed a family of Nations. Literally scores of nationalities play vital parts in the passing of news, business messages and information between the countries of the Commonwealth. Here, you see an Indian technician at one of the many transmitters at the Company's Singapore branch.

The Company owns and maintains wireless relay stations on the Commonwealth trunks routes, operates the overseas telegraph services of most of the Colonial territories and cable services in various other countries throughout the world. Furthermore,

it owns a world-wide network of 150,000 miles of submarine cables and maintains it with a fleet of 8 cables-ships.

Although it does not operate Overseas Telegraph Communications in this country, Cable & Wireless Limited is at your service day and night. The simple act of passing a cable form across a post office counter or 'phoning a message from your home or office to 'Overseas Telegrams' sets it working for you. Cabling is very easy, very swift, very sure and costs much less than you'd expect.

CABLE & WIRELESS LIMITED



ELECTRA HOUSE, VICTORIA EMBANKMENT, LONDON, W.C.2

Wynool fabric was selected in preference to any other material by Sir John Hunt and his fellow climbers of Mount Everest. Months later, 5½ miles high on the icy, desolate slopes, Wynool more than proved its worth to that tiny band of tired but gallant men. And now, beautifully styled and finely fashioned by Flintwear, Everest conquering Wynool is available for you . . .



Out and about in all weathers, whether blowing a gale, blinding with snow or blazing hot? Then Flintwear is definitely your wear. Thanks to wonderful Wynool, here are garments lovely to look at, yet with severely practical outlook on life—garments high on the list of high fashion, yet weatherproof beyond belief. Take your choice from Golf Jackets, Anoraks or Parkas (with trousers to suit, if you need them)—all of them skilfully, generously cut for elegance, freedom of movement and all-weather protection. And take your choice from the widest possible range of wonderful colours, and sizes as well. See Flintwear for yourself today (or write for a free leaflet illustrating the complete range) and you'll be a Flintwear-comfort-convert for life.

HOWARD FLINT SPORTS CLOTHING

Fashioned for active people out of doors

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... like Kunzle cakes —
a compliment to good taste

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Finely tooled bindings of Antique finish Leather, Morocco
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Hair Style by Manetta & Jean

"Now tell me how you like my coffee"

WHY DO THE MOST SUCCESSFUL HOSTESSES-ABOUT-TOWN USE LYONS PURE COFFEE?

There's a very simple reason . . . Freshly ground coffee beans will only make the best coffee if the beans themselves are **fresh**. The coffee beans used by Lyons are roasted and ground at the peak of their freshness, then the coffee is *immediately* aroma-sealed (by an exclusive Lyons process) in the well-known green tins. **It is the freshest coffee you can buy.**

LYONS FOR REAL COFFEE





Dress wear

for the more particular man

Personal fastidiousness apart, a man does feel and look so much more at ease in dress wear that is his own. At Austin Reeds, with so many fittings to choose from you are sure of finding a dinner jacket or 'tails' that looks (and is) immaculately yours.

Woven exclusively for us our dress wear cloth is moth-proof and never varies in shade. Because of this identical black you can wear the same trousers with 'tails' or dinner jacket and replace a single article without having to order a complete new outfit. Double-breasted dinner jacket £15.15.0. Tail-coat £19.19.0. Trousers £7.7.0. White dress waistcoat 52/6.

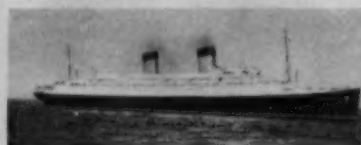
AUSTIN REED
Of Regent Street

LONDON AND PRINCIPAL CITIES
1852



The most welcome gift of all!

20/- bottle · 10/6 half-bottle
Also Magnums 40/-



A MOVADO

waterproof watch beats all records.

Immersed in sea water,

**IT HAS CROSSED THE ATLANTIC
AND BACK...**

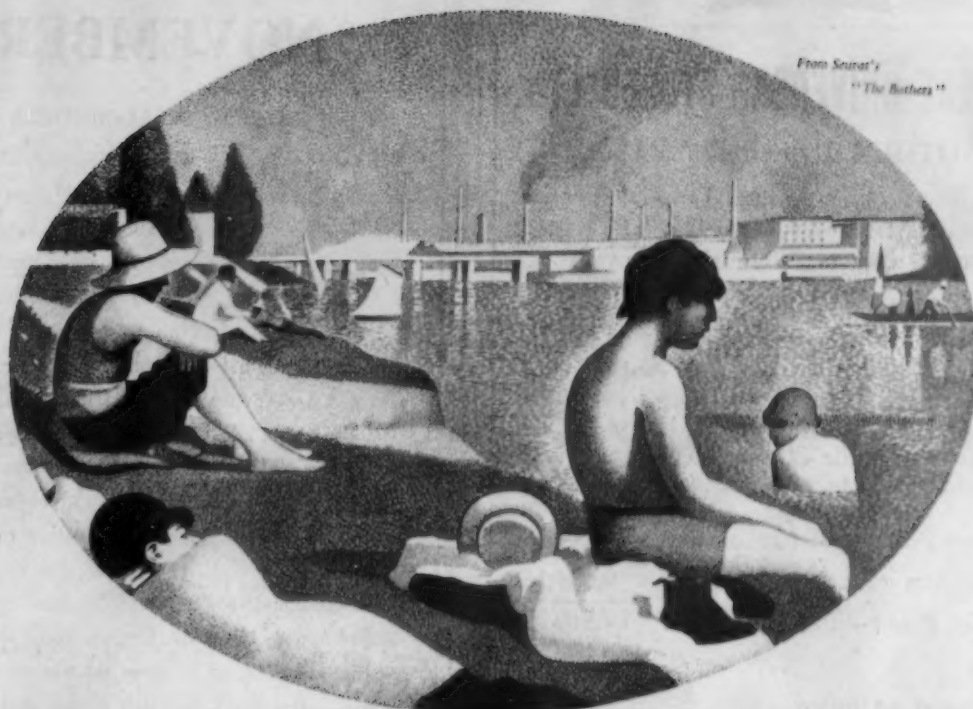


Ref. 18481, stainless steel,
£28.0.0.

... with the liner "Ile-de-France." At the conclusion of this gruelling test, the watch, a standard Movado waterproof, was found to be working perfectly, thus giving us irrefutable proof of the exceptional quality of all the Movado waterproof models.

MOVADO

Movado Automatic "331", the flattest self-winding watch in the world with the best protection against shocks (dual protection); super-waterproof.



We want margin to our lives—

THOREAU (1817-1862)

All trade requires a margin; a surplus that can be put to economic use after production costs have been covered by returns. Without it, the movement of goods and services which keeps us alive would stop next week.

A man's life too must show such a margin, if it is to be worth living; something that enriches his material day after his work is done. It may be a study or a sport; a language he is learning, a musical instrument he is practising. On a broader scale, a nation builds its picture-galleries and its playhouses; they are there to help it live beyond today's horizon.

To this wider life, of individual, and community, industry brings its contribution—leisure. Without this there can be no true civilisation, no lives that have 'a margin'. Modern industrial advances have extended, and redistributed, the nation's spare time; with the new, factory-made hours that they have brought, the Machine Age can one day transform itself into the Leisure Age.



Esso Petroleum Company, Limited



THE GREAT UNIVERSAL STORES LTD.

ANOTHER RECORD YEAR

The Thirty-seventh Annual General Meeting was held on the 20th October, 1955. The Report and Accounts were unanimously adopted.

	Year Ended 31-3-'55
Group Trading Profit	£18,856,896
<i>Less: Depreciation, Interest paid, Interests of Outside Shareholders of Subsidiaries, etc.</i>	<i>1,712,416</i>
Group Net Profit—before Taxation	17,144,480
<i>Less: Taxation</i>	<i>9,634,158</i>
Group Net Profit—after Taxation ..	£7,510,322

Appropriated as follows:

Transfer to Reserves and increase in Profit and Loss Account balance, etc.	4,582,884
Preference Dividends, net ..	62,439
Ordinary Dividends, net ..	2,864,999
	£7,510,322

Preference Stockholders

Issued Capital	£2,250,000
Dividend covered by net earnings after tax	120 times
Capital covered by net assets ..	22.4 times

Ordinary Stockholders

Issued Capital	£8,424,358
Rate of Dividend paid on present Capital	60% p.a.
Rate earned on present Capital ..	154%

Group Net Assets	£64,475,556
-------------------------------	--------------------

COMPARATIVE GROUP TRADING PROFITS

1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
£8,116,369	£9,954,976	£11,388,271	£15,487,741	£18,856,896

NOVEMBER

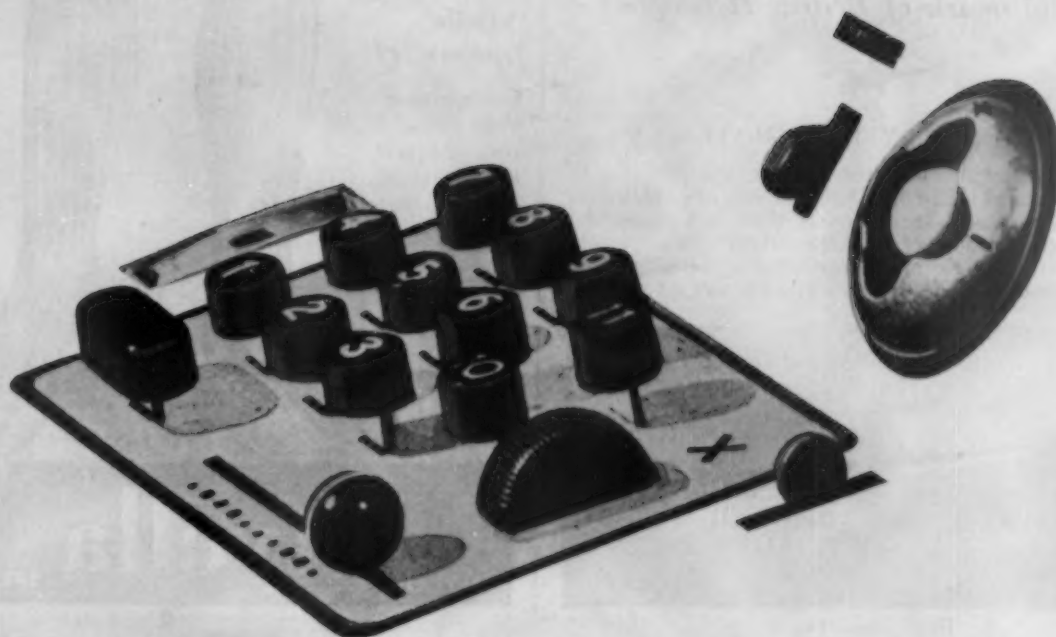
PIONEER SPELL-BINDERS

Who started Spelling Bees in England, and when? Answer: two M.P.s in 1875, in Islington. We are usually so busy worrying about how long Spelling Bees are going on (on someone else's radio which we cannot shut off, or round firesides at which we sit trapped) that we had not fussed about when the trouble started. Let us not blink the facts any longer. Two M.P.s, Sir Andrew Lusk, Bart. and Mr. Samuel Waddy, Q.C., allowed England's first Spelling Bee to happen under their auspices on November 20th, 1875. Thirty-two gentlemen and eighteen ladies competed for money prizes amounting to £8. A Mr. Jameson won. The words that knocked out most competitors were rhododendron, apocryphal, and philippic. Only Mr. Jameson could spell sesquipedalian. Well, to us these do not seem difficult words. But that's the catch in this spelling game. Just because we can spell sesquipedalian, and think we could have won the prize from Mr. Jameson, we begin being competitive-minded. Our doom is at hand in the podgy shape of some schoolboy who knows how to spell *battalion* and *ipeacuanha*. His shape and his deadly accuracy of orthography show that he has misspent his childhood frowsting in front of radio and TV sets, listening to Spelling Bees. He will grow up to be a monumental mason and tombstone-chiseller. It is all the fault of those two M.P.s.



One of those M.P.s was himself a banker (his bank later became part of the Midland). We draw no conclusions from this duality of interests. We merely state that, unlike the Spelling Bee, the Midland Bank continues to gain in strength and popularity.

MIDLAND BANK LIMITED



Made by Olivetti, the Summa 15 is a product of skilled precision engineering, designed to meet the most exacting requirements of business figurework. Hand operated, it is an adding-lating machine of outstanding simplicity, sturdiness and efficiency.

Summa 15 *Ready with the answer*

Hand operated
Capacity 10/11 columns
Automatic printing
Operates both in sterling and whole numbers
Sterling Cut-off Device
Direct subtraction and credit balance

olivetti



Ask for a demonstration to-day.

British Olivetti Ltd.

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Glasgow - 115/207 Summerlee Street, E. 3.

Authorized dealers throughout the country

WESTLAND

The Hall-mark of British Helicopters



STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

In his statement reviewing the results of the past year of Westland Aircraft Limited, the Chairman, Mr. Eric Mensforth, C.B.E., F.R.Ae.S., said: The Accounts show a Consolidated Profit, before Taxation, of £521,888, which compares with £306,069 last year. Normalair, our principal Subsidiary, has once more made a good contribution to the year's profit.



The Westland Widgeon

Helicopter Patent Rights and Licences have been charged to the Appropriation Account. If the results of the year's trading are to be compared with the forecast given last year, this may be done by deducting the above mentioned appropriation, i.e., £189,949, from the Consolidated Trading Profit.

The Company's range of Helicopters is the most comprehensive available in Great Britain for practical service at home and abroad. We are proud that the employment of WHIRLWIND and DRAGONFLY Helicopters eases, to some degree, the burden of Members of the Royal Family in carrying out their many public duties. The majority of Helicopters flying in the United Kingdom and Commonwealth are built by your Company, and most of the pioneering has been carried out with them.



The Westland Whirlwind

We have developed a new Helicopter, the five-seater WIDGEON, which carries a pilot and four passengers, or a pilot, ambulance attendant and two stretcher patients. The WHIRLWIND 10-12 seater is in full production and is, in fact, the only British Helicopter of its capacity in service.

For military transport as well as for effective civil operation a much larger Helicopter is required, and the Company have projected for this purpose the WESTMINSTER. Considerable progress has already been made with preliminary work.

Normalair has continued to develop and supply a wide range of aircraft equipment essential for operation at great heights, and supplied the Breathing Equipment which was used this year by the successful British Kanchenjunga Expedition.

WESTLAND AIRCRAFT LIMITED · YEovil · ENGLAND

'Viyella' Longsox 7/9

Self-supporting.
Nylon-spliced
at toes and heels.
Knee-length for
extra 'Viyella'
comfort.



'Viyella'
NYLON ALCO SPICED

'Viyella' Sox 6/9

Nylon for
toes and heels.
'Viyella' for
health and
comfort.



takes care

'Viyella' Gamesox 5/9

Ankle-length.
Self-supporting.
Refreshingly cool
for sub-tropical
wear.



of your feet

IF IT SHRINKS



WE REPLACE

ROCK-STEADY AT SPEED



SPORTS CAR FACIA



*From Bonnet
to Boot...*

A SUPERB NEW CAR

The exhilarating

FULL 4-SEATER



Sunbeam

RAPIER



Limpet-like road holding, flashing acceleration to around 90 m.p.h., overdrive standard on top and third gears, superb styling and comfort . . . From every angle this newest addition to a famous family of Rally Champions is the most exciting for years.

£695 (P.T. £290-14-2)

(White-wall tyres and overriders available as extras).

EXCEPTIONAL VISIBILITY



1.4 LITRES • OVERDRIVE STANDARD • TWO-TONE STYLING • LUXURIOUS REFINEMENTS
SUNBEAM-TALBOT LIMITED, COVENTRY, LONDON SHOWROOMS & EXPORT DIVISION: BOOTH LIMITED, DEVONSHIRE HOUSE, PICCADILLY W.1
A PRODUCT OF THE ROOTES GROUP

Apollinaris

is 'sparkling' spring water.

The Apollinaris spring overlooks the Rhine Valley. From it comes the soft water, naturally aerated, affectionately known as Polly. Apollinaris has the unique quality of bringing out the true flavour of a whisky.

Ask for 'Scotch and Polly'



SMOG

PREVENTED

by

PRAT-DANIEL Equipment

"Smog" from smoking chimneys can be prevented by P-D Equipment—low resistance collectors for laundries—turbo collectors for factories, multi-tube collectors for power stations.

ARE YOU READY?

"...dark smoke shall not be emitted from a chimney of any building, and if, on any day, dark smoke is so emitted, the occupier of the building shall be guilty of an offence."

"The occupier . . . shall use any practicable means there may be for minimising the emission of grit and dust from any chimney which serves the furnace and if he fails to do so, he shall be guilty of an offence."

Extracts from the "Clean Air Bill."

P-D Equipment is used all over the World. Please write for further details.

**PRAT-DANIEL
(STANMORE) LTD**
DALSTON GARDENS, STANMORE, MIDDLESEX



—the most heavenly shave on earth!

ERASMIC Shaving Creams

—THE SHAVE THAT
WISE "GUYS" PREFER!



P.S.

ERASMIC STICK IS BRITAIN'S BIGGEST SELLER!
—proof that if you like the stick way of shaving you cannot buy a better stick. REFILL 1/2 HOLDER 1/11

on skis or at ease



left Proofed poplin ski pullover with ribbed wool collar, waist and cuffs. Diagonal breast pocket with zip. In black, wine, blue and fawn. 9 gns.

centre Proofed poplin ski pullover with ribbed wool cuffs, side gussets at waist. Zip-up collar and two deep diagonal breast pockets. In blue, black, red, maize and white. 7 gns.

right Heavy-knit Italian sweater with wide patterned contrast bands at collar and waist. In green, yellow, scarlet and black. 14 gns.

Whether you ski well or end in a snowball, you do want to know that your ski clothes are right. And after-ski clothes are just as important. Choose your outfit at Simpson—then you'll know it's both good—and *authentic*.



Simpson (Piccadilly) Ltd.

London W1. Regent 2002



Shirt of Italian design, buttoning high across the front. In fine wool and cotton mixture. Check designs in the gayest of colours. £4. 5. 0.

You'll be happy with a



'COSYGLO' Electric Fire

Make the Party Glow! Treat your guests to the welcoming warmth of a G.E.C. 'Cosyglo'—the electric fire that makes the room warmer all round. It's the wonderful dispersive heat reflector—patented by G.E.C.—that does it. This spreads the heat on both sides as well as in front, and gives you a wide area of comfortable warmth.

The Modern Look. The attractive design of the 'Cosyglo' makes a handsome contribution to modern

furnishing. Its good looks will last, for it is soundly and strongly constructed for a long and useful life. This model is finished either in cream or silver bronze. **Safety Assured.** All G.E.C. fires are fitted with safety guards which comply with The Heating Appliances (Fireguards) Regulations 1953.

Ask to see the range of G.E.C. 'Cosyglo' electric fires and other G.E.C. models.

D2812 'Cosyglo' Pedestal fire **£6.14.6** Tax Paid

You must see these other **G.E.C.** favourites

The Bride's Iron
Fast-working Toaster
Designed for beauty Hair Dryer
Cleaners and Floor Polisher

Obtainable from your usual electrical supplier

BLUE BIRD LIQUORICE ROLLS

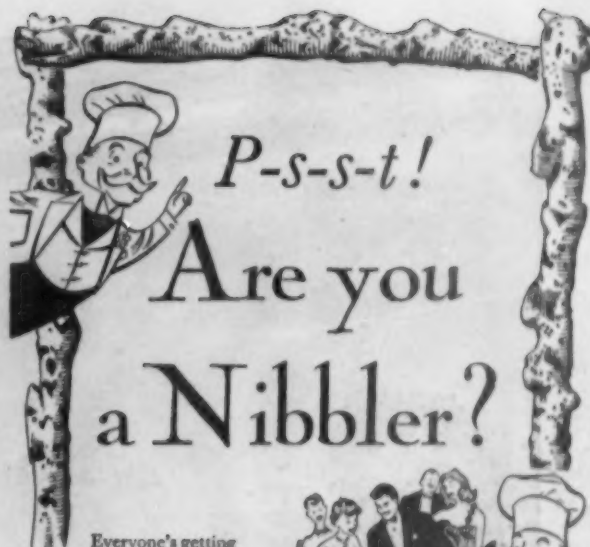
*A luscious
toffee with
a liquorice
flavour*



One of the famous
lines made by
BLUE BIRD



HARRY VINCENT LTD., HUNNINGTON, NR. BIRMINGHAM



Everyone's getting
the nibbling habit now that
Peek Frean *Twiglets* are here.
And no wonder—these crisp,
crunchy biscuits have such a
thrilling savoury flavour! Buy
a packet of *Twiglets* today; try
them with soup or salad, coffee
or cocktails—and you too
will be a nibbler in no time!

Twiglets

Made by PEEK FREAN—makers of famous biscuits



Eleanor Parker and Glenn Ford, co-starring in
M.G.M.'s 'INTERRUPTED MELODY' (in CinemaScope and colour)

Star quality...

REGENCY CREAM SHERRY

by Grants of St James's

B. GRANT & CO LTD

21 BURY ST · ST. JAMES'S · SW1



Even in frost and snow you start easily with BP Special Energol in the sump. It saves your battery and reduces wear.

Summer starting all through the winter

AND 80% LESS ENGINE WEAR

with BP Special Energol 'Visco-static' Motor Oil

YOU KNOW what starting your engine is like on a warm summer morning. Just press the button and away she goes. Running easily, freely, ready to bound ahead at the touch of the throttle. This is because the engine oil is so much thinner in summer than in winter.

Now you can have this kind of starting all through the winter. All you need to do is change to BP Special Energol 'Visco-static' motor oil. This all-the-year-round oil is extra thin when cold yet it has ample body when hot to protect your engine under all conditions.

You get adequate oil circulation from the moment your engine starts even in hard frost. This cuts out the main cause of cylinder bore and piston ring wear. As a result you reduce wear on bores and piston rings by 80%.

BP Special Energol saves petrol too by reducing oil drag in your engine. In start and stop running savings

can be up to 12%. In normal running you can save up to 5%.

Add up the benefits — easier starting, much less wear and saving in petrol. A change to BP Special Energol will transform your winter motoring. Decide to change now. But it must be a complete change. First have the engine drained and refilled, then run 500 miles and change again. After that revert to the normal oil change periods for your engine.

Do not use BP Special Energol if your engine is worn and in need of an overhaul. For such cars the suitable grade of normal BP Energol is the best choice.

BP Special Energol is obtainable at garages where you see the BP Shield, in pint, gallon and 5 gallon sealed containers.

BP Special Energol 'Visco-static' has already been tested and approved by most British Car Manufacturers.



SPECIAL ENERGOL 'VISCO-STATIC' MOTOR OIL IS A PRODUCT OF THE BRITISH PETROLEUM COMPANY LIMITED

'Visco-static' is a trade-mark of The British Petroleum Company Limited



SOME disappointment followed last week's announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It had been hoped that some reduction would be recommended in the number of Budgets in any one year.

One-Way Only

ACCORDING to a Washington dispatch Mr. Walter Reuther, American trade union leader, foresees that automation will ultimately bring a four-day week, longer holidays, earlier retirement and in general "an age of abundance and



freedom." He announces at the same time that the unions will firmly oppose any employer exploiting the new techniques with an eye to "the largest possible quick profit for themselves."

Poor Show

LAST week's tearing down and trampling of the United Nations flag by bellicose British patriots, shortly after Mr. Selwyn Lloyd had unfurled it in Trafalgar Square, was regrettable but not remarkable. Small, eccentrically opinionated elements are always to be found at ceremonies of this kind. More disturbing was the apathy of the crowd, who watched this attack on the emblem of their freedoms without raising a finger, and but for the timely intervention of a Ministry of Works official who happened to be present, and was in any case more concerned with the proprieties than the ideologies, the flag would still be kicking about in the traffic of Whitehall and the Strand. What is there to show for ten years' toil at UN Headquarters if a liberal-minded people cannot raise a cry of

"Down with the Empire, up with the World"?

Inside Looking Out

ANY cracks appearing in the new Comet 4, the manufacturers announce, will do so only after ten years' service and even then will remain "small and harmless." Forward-looking airline accountants are busy calculating the cost of throwing in a free dry-cleaning Service for the passenger with a good view of the wings who can't keep his eyes on his free dinner.

None So Deaf

RESEARCH into the problem of noise goes on doggedly, and experts are now reported to be measuring, checking, analyzing and classifying the din we live in. Public opinion polls, as a means of tracking nuisances, have had to be abandoned, unfortunately: researchers



who can barely make their inquiries heard above full-amplification cinema sound-tracks, football supporters' rattles or the scream of milk-shake mixers seldom get any answer but a shouted "What noise?"

Nor Lose the Common Touch

As Earl's Court closed its doors on yet another Motor Show one or two sighs of relief went up in Fleet Street. The sexlessness of the automobile, in papers commonly dealing in the streamlined female form, had as usual made interesting coverage difficult. A commendable compromise had been achieved in the *Daily Sketch*, however,

with pictures of an actress in an Aston Martin, another in a Singer Hunter and two more in the boot, another demonstrating a Rolls, another demonstrating a safety strap, a Miss World finalist sitting on the bonnet of a Triumph T.R.2 and (a near miss) the Prime Minister's niece on a motor-bike.

"What, More Grapes?"

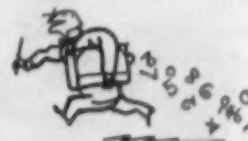
AMERICA is teaching us all the time, and the news that President Eisenhower is receiving visitors in pyjamas with "Much better thanks" stitched on the pocket has suggested yet another outlet for the funds of our National Health Service.

No Secrets

DETERMINED to answer the question which permanently puzzles ratepayers everywhere, Lambeth Borough Council has proposed to explain what becomes of its revenues. The scheme got off to a good start with an exhibition of photographs showing Lambeth's old folks enjoying a subsidized seaside holiday, and an announcement that other residents of the Borough could, for the asking, visit the municipal rubbish dump or go down a sewer.

Practically a Profit

NATIONALIZED commerce can often give a lesson to the private operator,



and never more effectively than in its valuable exhibitions of optimism and high courage. Many a small business man must have taken fresh heart when the deputy-chairman of the Gas Council, commenting on the year's loss of

£100,000 by the West Midlands Gas Board, described it as "trifling in relation to the total transactions of the Board."

Torchbearer

CULTURE marches on. While etymologists were still debating the admissibility of "automation" into the language a B.B.C. Motor Show commentator leap-frogged the lot of them with a bland reference to "automaticity."

Might Have Been a Bomb

PUBLICITY for the new report of the United Nations Disarmament Subcommittee points out that it has over



two thousand pages and weighs twelve pounds. Many people think that it should be ideal for anyone reviving those old leaflet raids.

Curb

IN acclaiming the N.C.B.'s achievement of a winter coal reserve three weeks ahead of schedule, fuel experts pay tribute to extra stints, improved consumption methods and (*sotto voce*) an adequacy of imports. The coal-burning public feels that a word of praise might also have been said for the price.

Forward in Reverse

"REVERSE matter," a sort of "looking-glass world," is the exciting corollary to the discovery at the University of California of the anti-proton. Wistfully one looks forward to its employment in an anti-atomic bomb having the reverse effect of the atomic bomb.

Oldest Ally

UNARMED, unready Britain
Need never feel dismay
Before the hosts of Muscovy,
The legions of Cathay;
No foeman looms before us
Who may not be defied
While yet the might of Portugal,
The serried arms of Portugal,
Of old and faithful Portugal,
Are standing at our side.

Stop This Waste of Man-power Now!

IT is time the Press Council took decisive action to curb the scandalous waste of manpower in Fleet Street.

The latest example of this disgraceful misuse of British journalists comes from the *Daily Statesman*. There two fully-trained writers are being paid to stay at home and watch the television.

Both these men have been in journalism for years and are capable of undertaking any work from literary criticism to tipping the winners of the afternoon's races. They could legitimately expect to be placed in positions of trust and responsibility from which it was possible to rise to the highest places in Fleet Street. Instead of this, what have their proprietors given them to do?

They sit in armchairs and gaze at the telly.

Not occasionally. Not once a week, on their evenings off. But every night, Sundays not excepted.

This is frankly just not good enough.

This is only the latest of a series of revelations that have come to light recently, and which show that all is not well in Fleet Street. In every pub from Ludgate Circus to Temple Bar hair-

raising stories are told of veteran writers employed in futile time-wasting occupations. There is hardly a paper where fully paid-up members of the N.U.J. may not be found earning handsome wages by going to the pictures or the theatre, or even by reading books.

Recently a national illustrated daily dressed up one of its most competent feature writers as a street musician and sent him out to play drivelling sentimental music in the gutters of London for an entire day.

The proprietor of this paper, interviewed by our representative, expressed himself as frankly unable to see our point of view. "You cannot expect journalists to spend all their working hours reporting palace gossip and scandals in barracks," he said.

We say he is wrong. We say that if there is not enough news to keep the boys on our national newspapers busy at their typewriters for eight hours a day, it is time the newspapers reviewed their man-power problems and released a few sorely-needed hands for the mines and the armed forces. We say that to keep trained men hanging about doing futile jobs is equivalent to treason.

It is not only in the national newspapers that this state of affairs exists. The editor of at least one "intellectual" weekly paper told our representative that he sometimes finds so little to do in his office that he is compelled to fill in his idle hours with appearances on television and even on "The Critics."

"I don't think my case is exceptional," he said. One of my mates who works for the *New Spectator* says that people in the office there have so little to do that they take part-time jobs reviewing books."

With this kind of example at the top it is small wonder that man-power abuse is rife at the lower levels. We hear of typists being ordered to make tea for the sub-editors, and young lads fresh from school sitting about in the front halls of gigantic palaces, built to gratify the megalomania of press lords, with nothing to do but run errands.

This kind of thing might have been all right for Lord Northcliffe. It will not do for the streamlined Fleet Street of 1955.





GUNPOWDER PLOT



All Talk and No Play

By R. G. G. PRICE

THE great periods of the stage are the periods when nobody bothers much about plot. Anybody who compares the plays as Shakespeare wrote them with the plays as stripped down by Charles and Mary Lamb will see that his attitude to plot was as high-handed as his attitude to spelling, while in Restoration Comedy the wit, the real purpose of it all, is broken up by short, inexplicable scenes that are intended to make the audience feel that, if they were just a little more intelligent, they would be stunned by the brilliance of the construction.

Since Chekhov's day, plot has gradually become attenuated, until now what matters is magic, wit, décor and nostalgia for death amid sprays of silver and gauze. In Anouilh, as in Beckett, theme has replaced scheme. Lovers

meet and part in chateaux or on railway-stations. Tramps wait endlessly for a mysterious Godot who never comes.

The next stage—and as a would-be dramatist who finds construction difficult, I await it with impatience—is the emergence of a drama in which the framework is purely visual, only the décor and the fact that the characters are on the same stage giving the proceedings unity. If no actor has any relation to any other actor and no line of dialogue to any other line, it could well, it occurs to me, symbolize the meaningful meaninglessness of life. Dialogue would give way to detached observations made by everyone in turn. I hope the stage of the future will have a place for work like my *Afternoon at Rambrécy*.

In this extract the scene is something

between a drawing-room and a park. In and out wander the characters. A ghostly game of loo is in progress at the back of the stage, and here and there dotted about are young girls looking at albums of heraldry, hard *soignée* women at knitting machines and old men cleaning flintlocks. A dwarf dressed in Hungarian military costume completes a series of pirouettes.

DWARF: So many questions lie in waiting for us. Do dromedaries wonder whether they have one hump or two? Those leaf-eared mice they found some years ago on an isolated plateau in the Andes, were they, perhaps, deciduous? Can it be an offence to obstruct a police dog in the course of its duties?

LE SIEUR FROGNAC DE FROGNAC: Autumn's the dusk of the year. Aye,

'tis cold: Ceres must wear her corn belt. I grow old: years ago 'twas policemen who seemed young, now 'tis Chelsea Pensioners. 'Tis easier to remember good weather in bad than bad weather in good. One can understand one's enemies; 'tis one's friends that are inexplicable. Truth, said my father, lay at the bottom of a Cartesian well. Aye, if Faith moves mountains then must Charity pay the compensation. Since the busy-ness of the bee depends on the laziness of the drone I can sit here drinking champagne from dead men's shoes; but no victory, no Westminster Abbey.

CHAMBERLAIN: It was not thus in the old king's time, that was born in exile, lost his faith at a Correspondence College and was crowned at Caxton Hall. This young whelp is ever surrounded by soft curates dressed up to the Nones. No Popery and wooden nickels, say I. Man was ever the hunter, woman pastoral, but woman prevailed. Yet it is not so in the Bible, a masculine book. History

would have been the worse for it had it spoken of the Shebrews.

DWARF: Why does the Lonesome Pine have a trail?

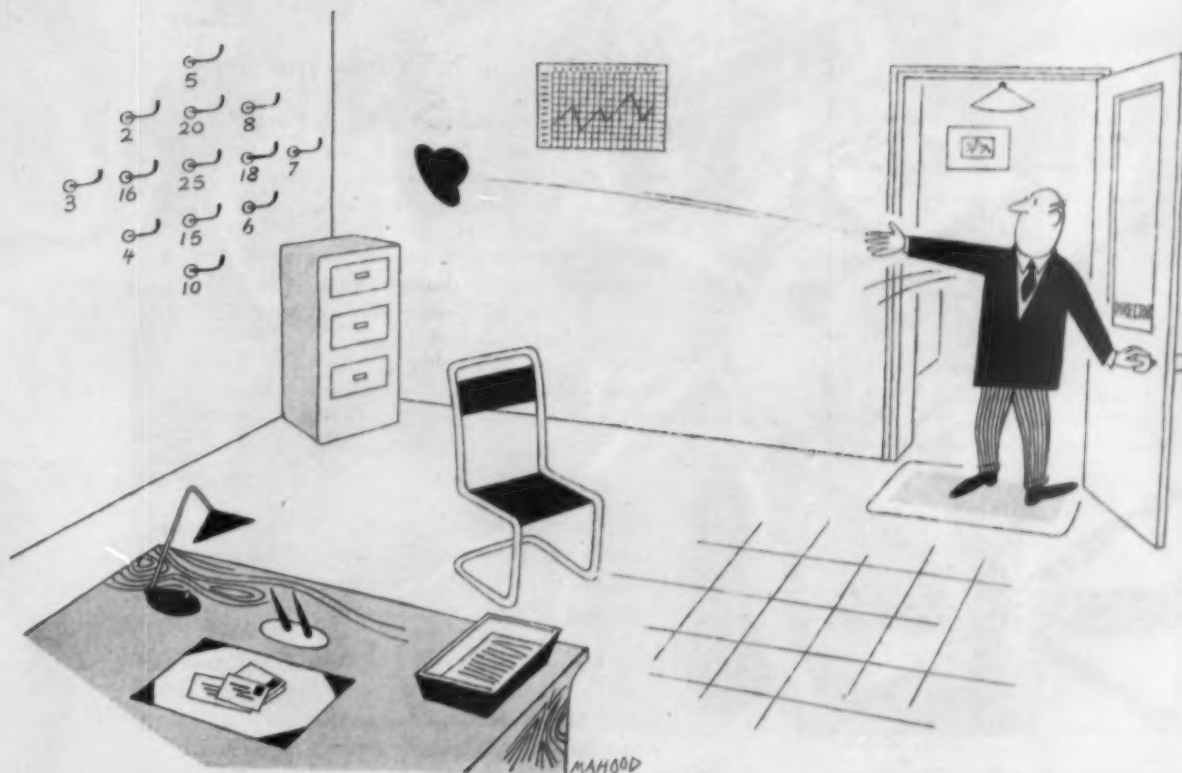
MARCO (*scratching armpits*): Cast your pearls on the waters as me ould feyther used to say. Oh, but he was as *fin de siècle* as Rufus. He was Professor of Surgery and much looked up to, and the rank and fashion crowded to his inaugural operation. One morning, and it's the merest truth I'm telling you, he passed by a church and there was a poster on it that said "Racing is a mug's game: the bookie always wins," so he became a bookie and the devil a bit of surgery he did again, except maybe to amuse the lads in the train on the way home from a meeting. Sure it was a poet he brought me up to be and insured my neuroses, but there are no verses hanging on trees any longer and poetry is as dead as the dado.

LADY PAM: Mark my words, if somebody lets off a hydrogen bomb the next thing we know we'll all be eating dried egg.

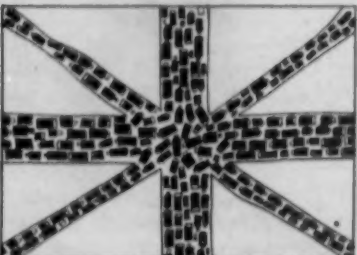
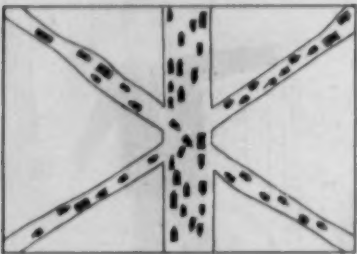
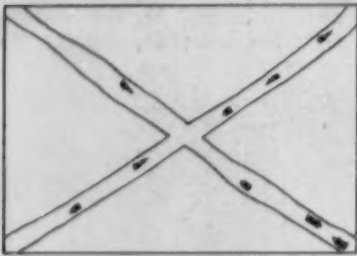
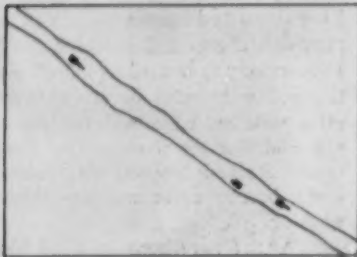
A LANDOWNER: Sound? Oh, sound is quite out of fashion. It lumbers after light. I have been told, by my steward, Einstein proved that when an aeroplane goes faster than light it will shrink. Provision will have to be made for this.

YOUNG GIRL: Our hockey captain—Beef-Olive we called her—was quite, quite unromantic. All her day-dreams were non-fiction. She lent me money once, but I regard it as a debt of honour, no more. It was to buy fruit, wax for the best bedroom, tallow for the others. Oh, why have I not status and knowledge as well as puppyish charm and greening hair? I am socially so limited. I know only that red wine must be served with meat-paste and white with fish-paste, aye, and that the washing that flaps upon our line is low and affronts me. I will borrow again and hire better washing.

LADY PAM: I have been divorced five times and intend to celebrate all my silver weddings. My first wedding night was undeniably dullish. We



played strip-poker misère, putting on clothes instead of taking them off. Sex is permutations without combinations, at least in literature. In literature anything is permissible if it happens in the American Marines or the Catholic Church. The recipe for a success these days is Boy Meets Boy. THE YOUNG COUNT (*dressed as a ticket collector*): I must tell you, Diaghilev was sitting at a table at Florian's when somebody came up and, thinking it was Cocteau, he said "Etonne-moi" but it turned out to be Bonar



A CANTHUS

A history of English road development.

Law who stayed for ages and kept saying things like "A critic is a man who sees more and more in less and less."

DAME MARLEEN: Denton Welch may have been the Frank Sinatra of wartime literature, but C. S. Lewis is a Michael Innes manqué. No wonder, you know, that Bing Crosby became a crooner, such a radiogenic face; but here I rattle away nineteen to the score, counting on my audience as optimistically as a slot-machine designer relies on the stability of the currency. Unfortunately, like some cuneiform censor chipping away at the hanging particples of Babylon, I make purely destructive sounds.

DWARF: Is confusing Harry Price and H. H. Price a cliché of unconscious humour?

THE GREY WIDOW: In the Wessex town of Ducis Tecum there is a smith who, when he tires of wreaking his wrought iron, sells books. Thinking children to be but low-grade adults, he panders to them with catchpenny titles like *Jessica's First Prayer*, but hides from them such fire-tinder

stuff as Wheatley's print "The harlot's cry from street to street."

DAME MARLEEN: I must feed continually on spectacle. My appetite ranges from Billy Graham on Ice to cloaca-and-dagger drama like *The Third Man*. How happy were my little white husband and I both being able to spit upon our in-laws, for we married beneath each other.

DWARF: Did the Trojan Horse have indoor sanitation?

You can, you see, provided you are supported by a good designer and a cast who can portray the heart-burnings of adolescence and the disillusion of age, go on and on, the final curtain being just a few words dying away in the bitter wind. My days of struggling with plots will soon be over and I shall not need, after all, to advertise in *The Stage* for somebody to dramatize my plays.

R. G. G. PRICE

S S

Safety First Stunt

"STEP BACKWARDS
'If H-Bomb Falls'"

Daily Telegraph

A Game of Consequences

COFFEE-cups cool on the Vicar's harmonium.

Clock fingers creep to a quarter to ten.
Softly, like patter of mouse-feet, the whisper
Of busy lead pencil and ball-pointed pen.

Separate hands scribble separate phrases—

Innocent, each, as the new-driven snow.

What will they spell when the paper's unfolded?

Lucifer, only, and Belial know.

"Ready, Miss Montague? Come, Mr. Jellaby!"

(Peek at your papers and finger your chins)

"Shy, Mr. Pomfret? You'd rather the Vicar . . . ?

Oh, good for the Vicar!" The Vicar begins:

"FAT MR. POMFRET met FROWSTY MISS MONTAGUE

UNDER THE BACK SEAT IN JELLABY'S CART.

He said to her: 'WILL YOU DO WHAT I WANT YOU TO?'

She said to him: 'THERE'S A SONG IN MY HEART.'"

What was the Consequence? What did the World say?

List, in the silence, to Damocles' sword!

To-day Mr. Pomfret has left for Karachi

And little Miss Montague screams in her ward.

PAUL DEHN



"Isn't that our waiter?"

Writer's Mail

By JOHN STEINBECK

A WRITER'S mail is very interesting, but gradually over the years the letters fall into categories. The most common is the fan letter, written simply because the writer, after reading something of mine, has felt the urge to communicate. These letters usually begin "I have never written a fan letter before." I wonder why that is always said. It is a little like the man who asks for an autograph never for himself but for his little daughter.

Then there is the letter which starts out with praise and then gets to work on my morals and choice of subject—"There is so much that is beautiful and pure in the world," it says, "why do you have to stir up ugliness and filth?"

A third kind of letter is the honest out-and-out denunciation. A great many of these utilize four-letter words and say real bad things. One man was so mad at me that he ended his letter "Beware. You will never get out of this world alive."

Then come the requests for autographs and pictures—some of them naive and some of them quite professional. These latter usually list the signatures they already have, including Thomas Mann—nearly always—and G. B. Shaw. The implication is that I will be in good company if I send it and a schmuck if I don't. One man sent me fifty slips of paper to sign. He was honest. He said he was going to trade them with other collectors.

Of course there are a great many thoughtful and intelligent letters—sometimes having to do with some phase

of my work which has interested the writer or to which he can contribute some information. Many of these are good and warming to receive.

The requests for money are fairly constant, though reaching their peak a few months after each book is published. Some of these seem genuine, but many others are straight hustles and not very clever. One time I received a collect wire from a man I had never heard of demanding that I send four hundred dollars by return wire for an operation. I very naturally ignored it. The next day, another wire came saying two hundred and fifty dollars would be sufficient if sent immediately. Again I was silent with flying money. In a few days I had a letter from this claimant. He said he had always admired me, but now he found I had clay feet.

There are always the bughousers—fortunately, not many, but nearly always repeaters. I answered a letter from a woman who said she was one hundred and one years old, and got a completely illegible postcard from her every day for a year. I made out of the scrawl that pretty soon she got me confused with her son who had died fifty years before. Then I had one pen pal who claimed she was married to me. And another who wrote often for a while and said that Joan Crawford was her mother and Bing Crosby her father and they wouldn't give her any money so she appealed to me, her uncle, to ask them to send her fifty thousand dollars. I got quite a few letters from that one and she enclosed pictures of herself. She was pretty, if the pictures were of her.

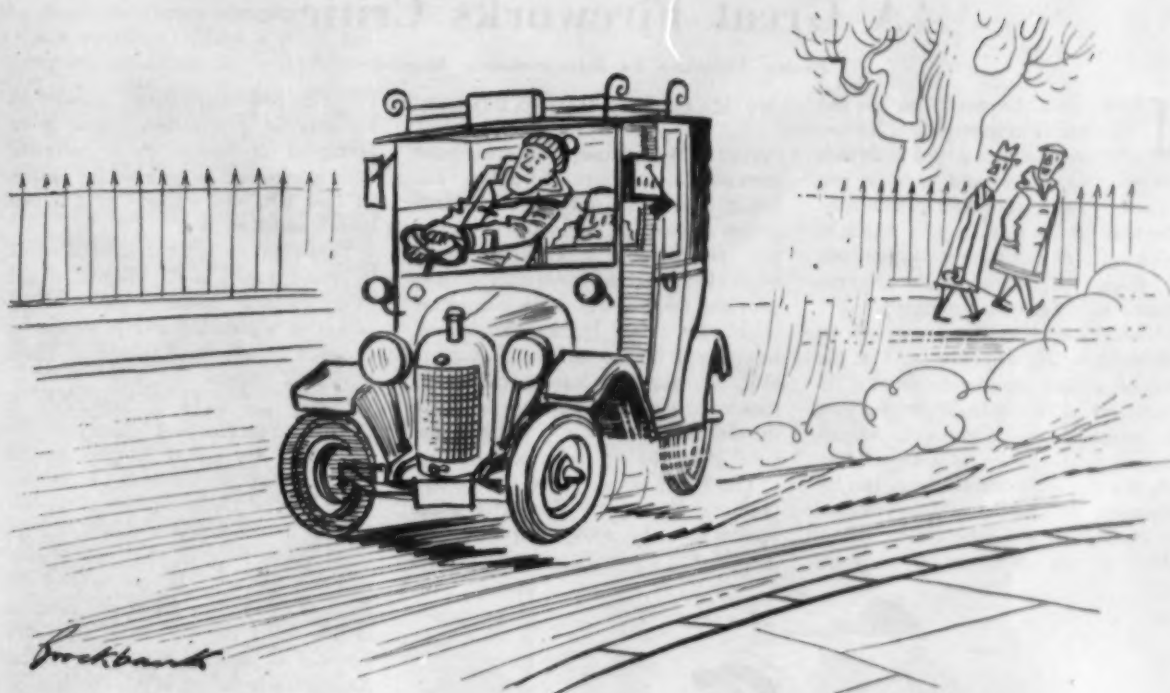
There are the letters asking for further information on a subject on which you have written, and others pointing out errors. In *East of Eden* I made an error in the spelling of Tinshol. I spelled it Tinshel. I have had over a hundred letters pointing out my mistake and many of them from profound scholars of Hebrew.

One of the commonest experiences to a writer is to be invited to act as collaborator. My mail is studded with such suggestions. The letters usually start—"I have had a very interesting life if someone would just sit down and write it up." The writer does not say why his story is interesting, being convinced and sometimes saying openly that unless contractually bound I might steal his material. The letters nearly always end with this business proposition: "You write it up and get it published and we'll split fifty-fifty." Some of the letters hint of dark political secrets, some of crime and injustice in high places, some of sin-strewn careers. Invariably, the correspondent suggests a meeting face to face when I will be given the fascinating material. There seems to be no suspicion that I might just as well steal it then as earlier. The letter always starts with the high moral implications to be served by such a work, but the end never fails to mention the fifty-fifty split of the loot.

I have had such letters from all kinds of people—convicts, old ladies who remember seeing Lincoln, ministers, doctors, dreamers, realists. I remember one letter, however, I liked very much and which tempted me. It went: "Dear Bud. I got a million stories. I run a saloon out in — and the Goddamndest things happen here. We could make a fortune just writing them down. You come out here and see. I'll stake you to grub and liquor. If you have a wife she can tend bar while we write." It was hard to refuse that one.

Then there was a whole series of letters from a man-and-wife flagpole-sitting team. Their courtship had been on adjoining flagpoles in a contest. Then they got together and were married on a flagpole, and at the time of the letters they were planning to have a baby one hundred and twenty feet in the air. They needed an historian, and





"I see young Moss wasn't long out of a job."

hinted that if I could pull it off the money would roll in.

I thought that would be hard to top, but recently I received a letter so meaty that I put it down in its entirety. The letterhead said "World Champion Lady Wrestler," and it went as follows:

"DEAR MR. STEINBECK,—After reading some of your books, I believe you are the proper person for me to contact.

I want to write a story based on my life and the twenty years I have spent in my profession. Not a story to particularly put myself over but one that pulls no punches on the inside of girl wrestling.

I have had many writers approach me for a story but I always had to protect my profession and besides no one can write what you have lived for twenty years but yourself.

My story would carry tremendous impact and if properly written will make a terrific picture.

At first I just wanted to write it myself and then have it rewritten properly as I would not have the ability on the finer points of writing.

But I am in very serious financial trouble's and must have \$5,000.00 to pay debt's immediately and money to exist on while writing. I have been offered up to \$1,000.00 for short scandle stories and have turned it down as that would take the edge off my book.

If you are able to invest \$5,000.00 which I know is small money to what could be made from the book, the first \$5,000.00 made could go to you and after that we could split 50-50 on everything.

If you want you can have full credit for the book under your name, as I am only trying to keep myself out of trouble. Of course my career will be finished after this book is published, I mean my wrestling career, that is why I must be sure to get something out of it, also I must have the money soon as my situation is critical.

Of course I would talk it over with you first so you could see I really have something to write about, something that would probably shock you.

Please let me hear from you by return mail, because if you are not interested I must try to find someone who is and

who has the ability to do it right. Everyone can not write this type of story and I am sure you will do it justice.

Hoping to hear from you by return mail."

You know I like the direct approach of this broad. She lays it on the line, and in my mind I have already cast the picture. I know some lady wrestlers in Hollywood—amateurs. I am pleased that she thinks I have the ability to do her story justice, but I am afraid that again I must decline.

"Yvonne de Carlo has been on holiday in Northern California . . . At Paramount C. B. DeMille is loudly singing Yvonne's praises. He was very pleased with her work as Sephora, wife of Moses in 'The Ten Commandments.' No one but DeMille believed she was right for the part . . . When I saw her she was looking very smart in beige Bermuda shorts with a matching shirt piped with brown and suede sandals of brown. Fascinating straw earrings, with bits of green and gold brightening them, bobbed gaily as she talked . . ."—The Star

Could have fooled us, too.

at Rome. Adequate coverage entailed much travelling. Many a timid wayfarer was alarmed by the sight of Henry Nimmo, with singed eyebrows and blackened face, his charred rags flapping in the wind, bounding on board the train to write his dispatch.

Kentish was old and stricken in years. He had never fully recovered from his great effort in reporting, single-handed, in a special supplement, the famous Illuminations at the Crystal Palace in 1865. For some years before his death in 1896 aged ninety-three (the longevity of Fireworks Critics is a problem for the gerontologist) Henry Nimmo had been doing the lion's share. We can but marvel at his industry. "This year," he records in the closing entry of his diary for 1897, "I have written some three quarters of a million words of Notices of Displays—many, alas, scarce worthy of the epithet Pyrotechnical—for the Paper. I have completed Volume II, 873 MS. pages, of my *Pyrotechnist's Vade-Mecum*. I have also composed a monograph of sixty-odd pages on *The Garniture of Rockets*, and an essay on *Gerbs and Fountains*. To-morrow, greatly daring, I start my biography of Berthold Schwartz, the thirteenth-century Gunpowder-maker and Father of European Pyrotechny." Truly a formidable record.

Nimmo's interest in Schwartz did not prevent him from coming down decisively on the side of the Italian school, as opposed to the North European school of Nuremburg, led by Clarmer, when he came to consider—as he did in a classic historical study *The Incandescence of Vulgarly*, the great Pyrotechnical Controversy of the seventeenth century. His preference for the elegant purity of the Italian style flared up, contemporaneously, at the time of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. So hard-hitting was his notice of the fireworks display, with its condemnation of the set-pieces as "all too apposite masterpieces of the egregious," that *The Times* felt compelled to exercise censorship. Nimmo resigned as a protest and founded his own organ, *The Catherine Wheel*, a voluminous weekly periodical devoted entirely to Fireworks Criticism, but later he yielded to persuasion and returned to Printing House Square.

A similar contretemps occurred in connection with his notice of the

National Peace Display in Hyde Park in 1919, perhaps the largest fireworks display in history. Again the set-pieces representing the monarch roused his indignation. He condemned them fiercely in a blistering article headed "From the Sublime to the Ridiculous."

When the second world war broke out Nimmo was living in quasi-retirement near Lewes, ever his favourite English town on account of its elaborate Guy Fawkes day celebration, which he described, tolerantly, in his *Uses and Abuses of the Bonfire*. He hurried at once to London to study effects during the air-raids, but complained that they were woefully disorganized.

Living, as he did, entirely for fire-

works, Nimmo had almost no private life. It was typical of the man that right up to the end he had to be restrained from giving away too much of his scanty substance to children collecting for guys. A certain singularity of appearance, total hairlessness resulting from occupational accidents, lent him a touch of the sinister which was utterly misleading.

Neat Choice

"A Brains Trust was held under the chairmanship of Mr. Warford. On the panel were Mrs. Seymour, Mrs. Silvan-Evans, Mr. John Cross, and Mr. Shearn. The 'brains' were thanked by Mrs. Brown." *Bristol Evening Post*



Drawing In

By CLAUD COCKBURN

BEAGLING, in my opinion, is not enough, and I hope a lot of people will write to the *Irish Times* to say so. Full marks, certainly, to that newspaper for prescience. Quite a long time back the men there went to work and figured out what was going to happen next, and what it was was winter. And—not a moment too soon—they have been running a series of articles making suggestions about "What to do this winter." Beagling is one of the things they pin faith to as a major time-passer.

Which, I am afraid, still leaves a lot of people sulking on the outskirts of the jolly crowd, pouting, idle and half-way to delinquency.

A let-down here is the way the Lessons of the Past don't help. We know, from picture and story, exactly what they did in the winter in the Past. They went skating. To which one can only say that it's about time people realized they aren't Mr. Wardle, or the late Breughel either, if it comes to that.

Sex used to come in handy, but it's getting trickier all the time. So many people have been fooling about with it, claiming to make the game more interesting, that nowadays the whole business is liable to degenerate into a sordid quarrel about the rules before play can even begin. Things were a good deal better when there were only English sex and French sex. A person knew where he was and could face the winter with a certain amount of confidence.

Then the Americans got hold of it and you had a whole new set of conventions and variations, like Double Kinsey, and Mailer's Bid and the Spillane Declaration, which admittedly

introduced some exciting elements for the novice, but in the long run, according to many experienced players, were apt to pall and cause monotony, with people shouting for their skates before the thing was half over.

More probably you are thinking of going in for constructing mobiles and writing letters to the newspapers. Certainly you can't go far wrong with mobiles—though you should make up your mind whether yours are Art, window display, or rather amusing actually—and don't forget a lot of tin goes into most mobiles, so your hobby will be helping Malaya.

Writing to the newspapers can also be a very big solace on these long evenings when you feel you simply must have something to keep your mind occupied while you watch television.

Anyone can learn to do it who is willing to memorize a few very simple rules. Always bear in mind that the optimum condition of a letter writer—I am speaking of beginners, for experts can afford to indulge in all sorts of extravagances, like pretending to be neutral and really care a hoot about the topic of the day—is one of being more or less appalled. And what you are appalled by is either that there is a lot too much of something and going to be more, or else too little and getting less.

There is a point, naturally, where letter-writing to some extent overlaps sex, which we thought we had finished with but haven't quite as it turns out. In this field, all you have to do is get clear in your head whether what's burning you up is that there is too much sex, a lot more than was considered perfectly adequate in days of yore, with more apparently on the way, or too little: Are English women frigid?

Adopt the same attitude to the sea around us. Are you appalled because it's encroaching, menacing acres of our richest farmlands unless the Government acts, and that speedily? Or do you worry because it's going farther away, threatening with ruin future generations of many of our port-dwellers, who will be left high and dry

failing drastic measures and vision by men who see the situation not from behind a desk in far away Whitehall, but on the spot?

If you can't get appalled, get in a dilemma and shout.

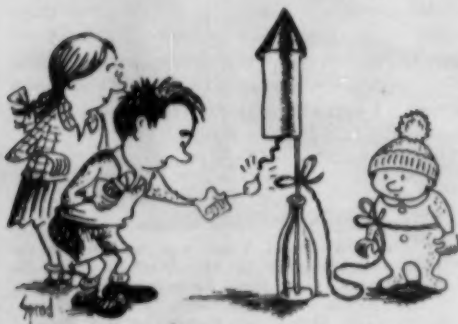
"My wife insists that next year it must be the Venice Film Festival for our annual holiday, but I say 'Waste not, want not' and feel my view is more in keeping with the country's needs. Am I an out-dated domestic tyrant reminiscent of days before 'the weaker sex' was emancipated from chattels, like my wife says, or is she being the tiniest bit silly billy, as I keep telling her? The happiness of our married life, which has endured, rain and shine, for over seven months, is threatened by rift. Can your readers help?"

If writing bores you stiff, and everyone else at the local is so good at darts you feel humiliated, bloodsports can be jolly good fun, and you get it twice—once while you are chasing the fox, and again when the people who think you a sadistic brute who ought to have gone out with public hangings and infant labour are chasing you.

Probably the most worthwhile method of trying to pull through the winter without spending everything on football pools, and also having something to show for it at the end, is first, try to think who you are, then specialize. Even if it takes you all winter to dope out who you are in the first place, the time will have been reasonably well spent. It's fun finding out. Besides, you wouldn't want to go through life, as so many do, forced to ignore Post Office advice because you can't "announce your identity" the way it tells you to in the telephone book.

The man who thinks he is an export expert when he is really an archdeacon is not going to get very far.

However, it is quite possible that you may already know who you are. You may be a General. In that case, what you had better spend the winter doing is laying in a fair stock of pithy phrases. It's true Wellington didn't actually say that thing about 'em, but he would have, had he thought of it in time, in the same way that General Pershing, on first landing in France in World War I would have shouted "Lafayette, we are



here!" had not the correspondent of one of the news agencies already got his cable off, quoting the General as having said just that.

Ideally, pithy statements by Generals—and this goes for Admirals, Air Marshals, and Chiefs of Police—should be (a) terse, indicating busy man of action, (b) apparently pregnant with meaning—suggestive of broad human philosophy underlying it all, (c) without actual intelligibility, so as to avoid possibility of denial.

On the subject of the Tank Corps or the traffic jam in Regent Street, say "Always remember, *speed is what you make it.*" Addressing a War Office Press Conference, rap the table slowly and say "Never forget, the Army of to-day is not so much an Army, in that sense of the word, as a body of trained men equipped with arms. I'll repeat that."

Judges, Magistrates and Professors would also do well to employ the period of hibernation preparing for the Spring Show of Thoughts for the man who wants quality at a price within his means.

"The problem of the criminal—and I may say I have given this matter a good deal of study, because I realize that what the average thought-user wants is a thought that has plenty of room and yet can be parked in a small space—is essentially the problem of the individual who for one reason or another feels like breaking the law and does so."

The advantage of a thought like that is that you can always be sure of good value when you turn it in for a new model. In the de luxe thought-range a good deal of interest is being shown in "As I see it, mankind—by which I mean the people of our planet as we know it—can only be saved from the consequences of human folly by the exercise of human wisdom, never forgetting that beyond the finite we must learn to recognize the infinite."

To politicians, on the other hand, thought-production as a winter exercise cannot be recommended. It leads nowhere, and its popularity among that class of the population rests on a misconception. People expect politicians to say something, because nobody likes to see old traditions falling into desuetude, but audiences only get fretful if they feel they are being called upon to notice just what the man is saying.

The Minister or Member of Parliament who wants to make the best use of



the winter should concentrate on trying to get people to focus on the fact that he is there at all.

Many legislators are apt to huddle over the Yule log planning felonies or bankruptcy. They are wasting their time, because although these may be the only obvious means of making themselves known to the public, they defeat their own ends, because other M.P.s who have not been able to bring off anything of the kind get together and turn them out of the House of Commons.

A sound basic rule for the politician who does not want people to think that he died years ago is to eschew any activity which can be considered as being of a political nature. Every politician over the age of consent has gone down the mine and been photographed chatting at the coal face with

"Big" Dan Dur of Durham who said "Bit hot down here, what?" at which the Minister laughed heartily, and what is the percentage in being the seventy-third M.P. to trek round Mao Tse-tung with an open mind?

Non-political things to do include getting lost on Mount Snowdon for days, with search parties losing hope; owning a winning greyhound which you bought for five shillings because you were sorry for it; being mistaken for someone else in Soho and stabbed or shot; getting into the Divorce Court.

Stick to that type of activity and you may be able to say with MacBali, the Indonesian poet whose every line is redolent of the opium-pipe (and what a jolly, full-blooded, no-nonsense-about-it down-to-spittoon opium smoker he was), "Comes spring, so that must have been winter just now, I think. Drink?"

THE WEEK'S GOOD CAUSE

"WE have no wish to see the commercial Colossus crumble," said Sir Ian Jacob, appealing on behalf of the Independent Television Authority (I.T.A.). "We at the B.B.C. hope to compete in accordance with the finest traditions of British sportsmanship."

Sir Ian continued: "Advertisers should not be discouraged by the paucity of viewers, the apparently heavy charge for commercial 'spots' or the quality of the intervening programmes: they should be prepared during these early days to throw good money after bad in support of a potentially significant organ of popular entertainment and culture."

"I think it would be a mistake," said Sir Ian, "to assume that the untimely demise of the I.T.A. would be welcomed by the B.B.C. On the contrary it would embarrass us. It would be difficult to find employment for the four hundred or so producers and technicians who had graduated from Lime Grove to Television House. It would be impossible to squeeze plagiarized programmes back into the B.B.C. television schedule. And the return of American comedy films, comics, announcers and compères might well be regarded as an unfriendly act by our transatlantic cousins."

"I hear that reception of the new programmes is unsatisfactory in certain areas, but bearing in mind the unavoidable immaturity of the fare provided and the reluctance of viewers to get their receivers adapted I do not regard this as a serious matter. Certainly it is no reason for the advertisers to withhold their financial support."

"Some of the items put out by the programme contractors are of excellent quality," Sir Ian went on. "I have found their time checks entirely reliable, and their breakdown signal a distinct improvement on that used by the B.B.C."

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

The Meteorite Racket

By P. G. WODEHOUSE

IT seems only yesterday—as a matter of fact it *was* only yesterday—that I was writing about the difficulty of making a living by selling second-hand bridges and rather suggesting that if I had a son I would never encourage him to take up that line of work. There is, as I pointed out, no steady income in it. You might have years when the bridges went briskly, but you would also have those long spells when nothing seems to go right. This is true also of getting struck by meteorites. No son of mine would ever go into the getting-struck-by-meteorites profession with my consent.

Way down in Alabama at a place called—I'm not kidding—Sylacauga, Mrs. Ann Elizabeth Hodges, who rented a bed-sitting-room at the house of a Mrs. Birdie Guy, was lying on the sofa one afternoon not long ago when she was surprised—and at first not at all too pleased—to see a meteorite come through the roof and hit her in the stomach. Reflecting, however, that there might be money in this, she applied to a neighbouring museum and learned with considerable gratification that it was prepared to offer \$2750 spot cash for the meteorite. Pretty soft, said Mrs. Hodges to Mrs. Guy, and was stunned when the latter claimed that since she owned the property on which the meteorite fell, it was rightfully hers. Mrs. Hodges counterclaimed that she owned the stomach on which the meteorite fell, and an action resulted. I am glad to say that it was amicably settled out of court, and Mrs. Hodges paid Mrs. Guy fifty dollars. She then sold the meteorite to the museum for \$2750, and that is all she has got out of the thing. She goes and lies on the

sofa every day, waiting expectantly, but nothing happens. She has reached a dead end. What looked like a promising racket has, as so many promising rackets do, turned blue on her.

That is why, as I say, if I had a son and he came to me and said "Pop, the time has come when I must be thinking of my career, of the niche I am to occupy in the great world. I shall shortly be leaving school . . ."

Talking of leaving school, have you heard that rather charming story of Mary Jane Croft, the radio actress, and her son Ricky? Ricky had reached the age when it became necessary for him to go to school, and his mother managed with a blast of propaganda to make him enthusiastic about the idea. She bought him new clothes and told him about the other children he would meet and the new friends he would make and got him so sold on the project that he went off to school one morning and came back with excellent reports of the place. He said he liked it. He had found it interesting.

Next morning his mother went into his bedroom, touched him on the arm and said he had got to get up.

"What for?"

"You have to go to school."

"What, again?" said Ricky.

However, that has nothing to do with meteorites; and it was about meteorites and getting struck by them as a life work that we were speaking, were we not? Let me just look back for a moment. Ah yes, my son is telling me that he is leaving school shortly and wishes to decide on a profession, and after a bit of father-and-son dialogue in the course of which he rejects the Army, the Navy, the Church and the

Stage, he reveals that what he feels he has a call for is getting struck by meteorites. He has read the Hodges-Guy case and has been greatly impressed by it.

"Study the record, Pop," he says. "This Mrs. Hodges got \$2750 from the museum, so that even after unbelted fifty dollars to Mrs. Guy she is \$2700 ahead of the game. All that from one meteorite, mark you. A meteorite a day—"

"—keeps the doctor away. True. So far I am with you, but—"

"At \$2700 per meteorite per person per day, that would be \$985,500 a year. Nice money."

"Ah, but have you considered, my boy, that days—nay, weeks—might pass without your getting struck by a meteorite?"

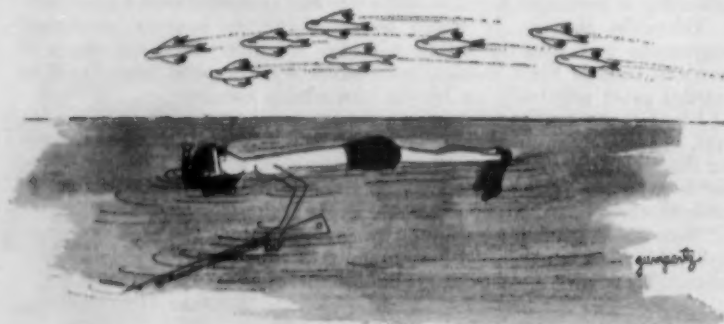
"Oh, I shouldn't think so."

"I should. They are most unreliable things. You can't count on them. Capricious is the word I am trying to think of. There are hundreds of people in America who have never been struck by a meteorite."

"I never thought of that," says the lad, and goes off and becomes an average adjuster, and does well.

Not so Mrs. Hodges. I doubt if you could ever convince her that she is living in a fool's paradise. She has got it into her head that being hit in the stomach by meteorites is where the big money is, and nothing will eradicate the idea. She has heard that lightning never strikes twice in the same place, but she cannot believe that the rule applies to meteorites. Maybe she is right. Who knows? Anyway, any afternoon you look in at Balmoral, Eisenhower Road, Sylacauga, Ala., you will find her lying on the sofa in the suit of chain mail which she now habitually wears, looking up at the ceiling and hoping for the best. Good luck, Mrs. Hodges.

And good luck, too, to Mrs. Birdie Guy, who is down in the cellar, listening for the crash and waiting for her cut.



Many Mansions

"MY WIFE IS GONE—20-ROOM VICAR"
Daily Sketch

Fly on Thingummy Rock

By DAVID GWYNNE

THE tall youth laid a pile of handwritten manuscripts on the desk.

"You may think it a little too modern, sir," he said, "but it reflects the essential mood of the school. We live in a technographical world."

"I suppose this photograph of a . . . hinge? . . ."

"A sixteenth century hinge, sir."

"... has some æsthetic merit, to which I am blind, vastly in excess of that study of the cloisters which we always use. Even so, I think we will continue to use 'Cloisters at Evening' as our frontispiece."

"I have drawn up a short list of the best stories and poems, sir. You are quite adamant about the hinge?"

"In the last twenty years," said the master wearily, "I have had to be adamant about twenty equally abstract frontispieces. I could write a monograph, 'The Hinge and its Æsthetic Relatives.' The hinge is out. I do not mean to be officious. I like the *Reptilian Clarion* with cloisters."

"As Editor, sir," said the youth, "I must say I think the stories show a remarkable improvement in technique over those in last year's issue."

"Well," said the master. "I hope so. But I have a shrewd suspicion that the prize will be won by a story dealing with suicide, possibly unpunctuated, definitely polysyllabic and identical with the prize entry of the last ten years. Ah, Inkerman's little effort. 'Fly,' a beguiling title. This first line—

Fly on poluphloisboious rock,

is an improvement. It used to be bed-bugs. Realism is losing its stranglehold on the Upper Sixth. A dangerous tendency to decadence is taking its place. What about poetry?"

"We thought this one the best, Mr. Edgeworth," said the youth hesitantly. "I may have to do a little explaining but you must admit to its originality. It gets right away from these pallid adumbrations of Tennyson."

*You and I and the weltschmerz
Can let the barbiturates wait.
Take up the saxophone.
Play till it . . .*

Edgeworth paled. "No, positively not. This is the worst line in the whole of English poetry. Is the boy mad?"

Play till it hertz . . .

Do you not realize that while hundreds of parents are leafing through this magazine, looking for their son's name in a second eleven, they may see this?"

"Ah," said the youth, "I had rather expected this, sir. Allow me to explain. When you read it you possibly were somewhat bewildered . . . and when you came to the last line you thought 'No, he can't possibly use that word. And yet it seems the only one. Still he will never, never use it.' Well, he did."

"I know," said the master, "but he will not, positively not, use it in print. I had rather the hinge a thousand times. Even 'fly on thingummy rock.'"

"But that is the virtue of the whole thing, sir. It is the . . . anticipated thunderbolt . . . which comes as a surprise."

"Pass me a pallid adumbration of Tennyson please. Ah, yes. Symons, Upper Fifth."

Weep, weep, weep,

Much better. Symons is our prize-winning poet. Now, I assume that there lurks in that pile of manuscripts a passionate defence of pacifism? And an article by a sixth form intellectual casting grave doubts on the value of physical exercise? And an article by the school bully on the Virtues of an English Gentleman? And an article by a school muscleman casting grave doubts on the value of sixth form intellectuals?"

"Yes, sir," said the youth, "among others. There's also a little *jeu d'esprit*, 'Shoot the Over-Forties,' and 'Marx and the Public Schools.'"



"Would you wrap it as a gift?"

"And a number of indifferently drawn, scarcely recognizable members of the staff, uttering their favourite catch-phrases? And, of course, seemingly innocent but actually scurrilous allusions to my colleagues, at whose meanings we can only guess? I think the magazine is up to its usual standard."

"There's also the editorial, sir."

"Is it punctuated?"

"Not altogether, sir."

reptilian clarion issue of 55 behind us the old worlda eldorado and poietesme. ahead no aleppo, damascus dying and the school about us. this time is there anything new? anything new to say? has it all been said?

we think not: there is more to say still: said by our poets in a new way, restated by our artists.

"Yes," said the master. "I think I know what you mean. I may have to make a few revisions, of course. Incidentally, though the illusion of editorial freedom may have been rudely shattered, I mean about the hinge and that . . . poem, I am willing to defer to your judgment as far as the prize-winning story is concerned . . . fly on thingummy rock. Suppose you leave the editorial to me."

Reptilian Clarion,

1955.

EDITORIAL

The Editor's task is ended with this brief account of the school year. Readers of our magazine will find the usual host of good things. We think you will agree that talent, much in excess of the ordinary, has been displayed in many contributions.

G. D. Symons has carried off the poetry prize with "Weep, weep, weep," a very moving effort which betrays something of the influence of Tennyson. The prose prize has been awarded to "Fly," a remarkably able study of suicide by Inkerman.

In conclusion, the Editor's thanks are due to all contributors and to Mr. Edgeworth for his advice.

"MINISTER SEES
'BLACK SPOT'
AT HARWICH

CRITICISMS OF PORT"

Daily Telegraph

Stick to brandy.

V.I.P.s from Portugal

By H. F. ELLIS

THE ordinary tourist, back in 1950, did not expect much of a welcome in Spain. Relations between the two countries were less than cordial even. Rumour reported that the natives were coldly hostile to foreigners, inclined to brood for hours over paper formalities, and much given to the wearing of uniforms. The Portuguese, always somewhat sparing in their praise of Spaniards, raised their hands in shocked dismay on hearing that one intended to cross the frontier. Two young Swiss, encountered in a *pousada* outside Lisbon, who confessed that they had just returned from three days in Madrid, replied to our eager questions with a simple "To be back here is wonderful." There was a smell of salt mines in the air.

Viewed from Vila Real de S. Antonio across the waters of the Guadiana the Spanish coastline had a sultry, forbidding look in the hot noon sun. The temptation to stay in Vila Real was strong; and that is saying something, for Vila Real is not a place where one would ordinarily wish to linger. Too many dead tunny fish are dragged vastly in tumbrils along the waterfront for

that. But here, on this side of the Rubicon, was warmth and geniality, the gayest, friendliest people in Europe, pink-washed houses and perfumed wines in earthenware jugs, bloodless bullfights and endless wildflowers and two young Swiss who thought it wonderful to be back; and there, on the other, lay arid mountains, dusty plains, officialdom, cold shoulders, tall dark men waiting to run one through for some fancied insult to their womenfolk, and (with luck) a glass of sherry for which I do not greatly care.

Still, there it was. We boarded the ferry and, after half an hour's wait for a young Englishman who was late, puttered across in great gloom to Ayamonte. The Englishman shared our apprehensions, but held out some hope that, with the aid as interpreter of a Scotsman from the Tharsis mines who was due to meet him at the pier, we might all three be through the formalities in under a couple of hours. In fact, the Scotsman did better than this. "Give me your passports," he said, as we looked vaguely about for somewhere to queue, and was gone for perhaps two minutes. "If you two are training to

Seville," he said, returning without them, "I'll give you a lift to Huelva later on. Let's find some lunch."

"What about our luggage?" we said. "The Customs? There are currency documents . . ."

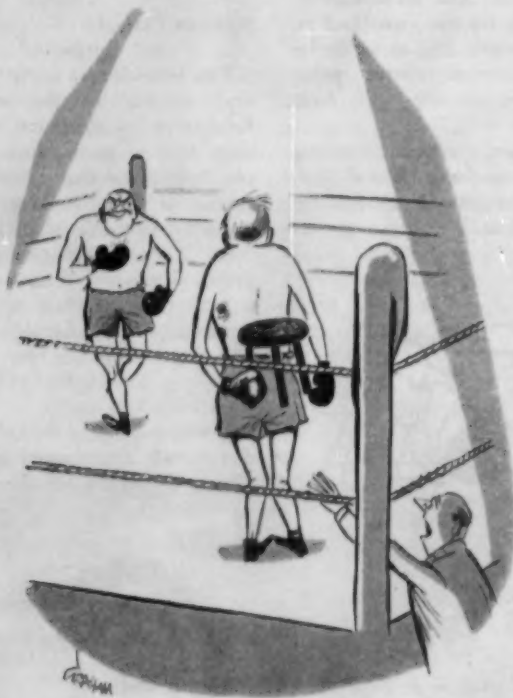
"It is arranged," he said briefly, and strode off, flinging out salutations to Spanish officials right and left, for all the world as if our two countries were on speaking terms.

Of the geography of Ayamonte I recall very little. It is possible that we went left up this street and right down that and across some square or other. The mind of a stranger, who has been separated from his passport and baggage, has queued nowhere, signed nothing and declared less, is too full of the stories he has heard of Spanish gaols to be aware of the passing scene. But we came quite soon to a cool inn, where we drank a Rioja wine and had made some progress with a meal of considerable charm before there came a trampling of many feet and the room was filled with uniforms.

"It is the arrest," we told ourselves.

The Scotsman leapt to his feet, with cries. There were embraces. Much Spanish. Introductions. "The Chief of Police? Good G—afternoon. Delighted!" "The Chief of Customs? Charmed!" And who is this gorgeous creature? Head of the Frontier Guards, perhaps? Honoured, in any case. We were gay. We nodded and smiled. We shook hands with the Captain of the Fire Brigade, nodding fifteen times in quick succession to show that we understood not one word of his complimentary addresses. "Si, si," we said. The Chief of Police called for Spanish brandy. A dark green uniform handed us our passports with a bow. We drank. An Admiral of sorts spoke to us at length and the Chief of Police came round again with the bottle. "Si, si," we said, with radiance. "Gracias!" The Admiral clinked glasses. Or it may have been the Mayor. In any case, the Chief of Customs had the bottle now, and we drank again. There were toasts. "Gracias!" we said to the Frontier Guard, who was pouring.

"These Spaniards," I whispered to my companion, "are not so hostile as they are made out to be."



"Si," he said, "si."

The Chief of Police, a most indefatigable disher-out, was at my elbow again. Of Spanish brandy it may be said, without offence, that three or four, or five, are enough around midday. "No, really," I said, with gestures so large and unmistakable that they were at once intercepted by the Scotsman, who threw a swift "He'll be offended if you refuse" at me over his shoulder.

I accepted, with laughter on both sides and a perfect hurricane of head-nodding. Wherever the Englishman ventures abroad the theory that his hosts will be offended if he refuses is sure to be encountered. Whole quarters of mutton are forced down reluctant throats for fear some Sheikh may wrap himself in umbrage; wine-gourds are drained to the lees lest a Greek shepherd feel himself shamed before his fathers and his children and his children's children. The theory may be correct. It may equally well have been started by someone like Doughty or Lady Hester Stanhope to gratify their enormous appetites. The Sheikh, it seems to me, when all is said and eaten and the nauseated guest has reeled away, may possibly blow out his cheeks and say to his womenfolk, "I thought the fellow would never stop." Still, one likes to be on the safe side. So I accepted.

So also, I noticed, did my companion, with reiterated "*obrigados*" so indifferently pronounced that even in Portugal they would hardly have been understood. I began to fear that he had almost had enough.

"Be careful you don't have enough," I warned him, "or you will have to refuse, and that will offend them." He asked me what the devil I was talking about, but the Admiral was there again, filling me up, and I had to break off to embrace him. He had many ribbons, which I counted for him, and he looked to me the last man to run me through for insulting his womenfolk. I wished very much to tell him this, and to assure him that everything I had ever heard about Spain was untrue. But my Spanish was unequal to the occasion, and even in English the sentiment seemed difficult to phrase. I gave it up, and clinked glasses instead with a brimming vessel that had for some time been held invitingly in front of my eyes. "*Santé!*" I cried. But it turned out that I was

holding this second vessel in my left hand, and the circumstance caused much laughter, in which I joined. I may even have led it.

Time passed and the atmosphere grew friendlier. I made a short speech, and the Fire Brigade Captain wiped the surplus brandy from my waistcoat with much delicacy and good humour. The Chief of Police and the Chief of Customs, who may not have been accustomed to so much fiery liquor, were clinging to my arms for support, one on this side and one on the other, and presently we found ourselves outside in the blinding sun. "Get them into my car," I heard the Scotsman say. But the two Chiefs must have had other engagements, for when we drove off my companion and I were alone in the back, with only the Scotsman and the young Englishman in front.

But all this was five years ago. They say that since those days the Spaniards have lost their xenophobia and welcome the foreigner to their country with much increased cordiality. That is one reason why my companion and I have not been back.

"Manufacturers have done their best at the Motor Show to let the customers see the works . . . Most impressive is the Fiat 600. When a technician presses a button, it comes to pieces . . ."—*News Chronicle*

Got that one off a used-car salesman.



The Public v. The Public

"Mr. Frank Powell, Clerkemwell magistrate, described as 'Gilbertian' a situation in which, if he imposed fines on summonses brought for the public benefit against a nationalized undertaking, the public would have to pay the fine."—*Daily Telegraph*

I AM lying awake with a dismal headache, and repose is taboo'd by anxiety. For a Public Concern, I am sorry to learn, has inflicted a wrong on society;

Such a clear case of tort must be taken to court, and I trust that all true men . . . and women'll

Entirely agree that the Public should be in the dock as the dastardly criminal.

I shall not be resigned until someone is fined for a deed so revoltingly shameless,

And I speak, I may add, for the Public, by gad, whose behaviour throughout has been blameless;

And I hope judge and jury will bridle their fury and act with judicial restraint if

They find each contentent is both the defendant and also, *per contra*, the plaintiff.

E. V. MILNER

The Ladies—Royal and Ancient



ONE of the charges brought against Mary, Queen of Scots, was that after the death of Darnley she was seen playing golf in the fields beside Seton, thus showing lack of proper feeling. Vulgar rumour had it, as vulgar rumour would, that she was having a round with Bothwell; but the specific charge was only that she was knocking a ball about by herself. Indeed, it was unlikely to have been otherwise, for knocking a ball about by themselves was all that ladies' golf amounted to then, and for a good three centuries to come. Ladies did not play games with men—that is to say, not outdoor games.

In the minutes of the Royal Musselburgh Golf Club there is recorded in 1810 a resolution by the gentlemen members to present a prize of a creel and skull to the Fish Lady who should do the best score on the day of the next annual occasion. We do not know whether, at that one merry meeting, the gentlemen indulged in mixed foursomes with the Fish Ladies; but we do know that ladies, as distinct from Fish Ladies, were not allowed to disport themselves on golf courses except at stated and, one

can be sure, inconvenient hours. And so in rising dudgeon they started to form their own clubs; the first in 1867, boldly and fittingly at St. Andrews. This act of feminine independence gave the young Victorian woman her first opportunity of meeting other women outside the home in the pursuit of something totally unconnected with the family, servants, charity, or the church. The men said it would all end in tears and squabbles. But they were wrong. It led to the formation of the Ladies Golf Union.

Much has been written by many masters of the graceful pen and putter about the charms of golf; but not much about the charmers. Reminiscences which include famous lady golfers refer more to their play than to their persons. Men have respected, admired, worshipped, and even married women golfers, but they have never written lyrics to them. The immortal ballad of the Littlestone Club which celebrated Miss Starkie-Bence's performance at the first L.G.U. meeting in 1893, *Miss Starkie-Bence with drive immense*, was good straight reporting in the factual ballad tradition. Even in these days of

equal play for women, although there is camaraderie and to spare, there does seem to be, while the game is in progress, a temporary suspension of susceptibilities. The Ladies Open Championship never excites the intense interest over and above the rigour of the game (some would say beneath) that the Wimbledon Tennis Championship excites; neither does it attract so many camera-men. It is not unreasonable to suspect that this is because fashion plays a very close second to tennis at Wimbledon, whereas on the links it plays to a very long handicap.

In the early days of ladies' tennis and

golf the clothes were much the same: sailor hat, shirt blouse, tight waist-band, sweeping skirt—Mrs. Lambert Chambers or Lady Margaret Scott, it was the same turn-out. Miss Mabel Stringer has given a tortured account in her golfing memoirs of playing in a stiff collar which made sores on her neck, long skirt with petersham belt, and plural petticoats heavy with mud. For winter, she had her skirt bound with leather at the hem so that she could wash off the dirt. All these garments, and the laced corsets beneath, naturally impeded the swing. Ladies' golf courses therefore consisted of some short putting holes, some longer holes admitting of a drive of seventy to eighty yards, and a few suitable hazards. The drive was confined to this length because, according to Lord Wellwood in the Badminton Library, "the postures and gestures requisite for a full swing are not particularly graceful when the player is clad in female dress."

It did not occur in that day and age to alter the clothes to the game, the game was restricted to the clothes. Now it is the other way round, even to the point of abandoning "female dress" altogether. Slacks may be ugly, but they are no longer un-L.G.U. They appear on all the best courses, at all the big meetings, and by no means only on all the best figures. This is so in most golfing countries, although in Australia they are not allowed. Slacks are warm and comfortable, they do not impede the putt on a windy day, and they enable one to dispense with stockings and all they hang by. Nevertheless, despite these advantages, for those above a certain age and beyond a certain hip measurement, slacks should be considered never-nether garments.

A modern man's opinion on the subject should bear weight, especially one whose business, pleasure, and passion is the designing of sports clothes. Teddy Tinling, whose advanced tennis fashions each year cause fresh alarm and consternation at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, is a traditionalist where golf is concerned. In golf, he believes, the gap between tradition and high fashion is too great to be bridged. This is authoritative because very few ladies' teams—golf, tennis,



"Hold it away from you, dear—like mummy."

archery or other sport—set forth from these shores that are not caparisoned by Colonel Tinling. He is the man behind the women; and from that particular position his view is unfavourable to slacks.

The L.G.U., however, do approve grey worsted slacks (not tapered, not drain-pipes) for international matches, as a windy weather alternative to the Tinling designed grey skirts, cut flat in front, with pleats at the back well out of the way of the putt. When the grass is wet, skirts really have the advantage over slacks, which get damp and flap about the ankle. But there would be much to be said for trousers of the long loose plus-two kind which used to be worn for ski-ing before tapered vor-lagers became fashionable. These, worn tucked into and bagging over ski-length socks, would be well above the wet grass except in the roughest rough. Spats such as highlanders wear in the heather would make a bonny and practical accessory.

Most female feet, when the ground is wet, are shod in a kind of hybrid laced galosh with studded sole, which is singularly inexpensive and much less tiring than the heavy nailed leather hoof. But for those who dislike wearing an all-rubber shoe, there is a new waterproof golfer with uppers of "aquatite" veal. This shoe combines the virtues of both veldschoen and moccasin construction, yet is lightweight and flexible. For less sodden days, the same London sports shop offers an even lighter, even chic-er shoe, with a cork middle sole, by Fenestrier of Paris.

The ubiquitous thick-knit sweaters and long cardigans have, in the last year or so, to a large extent taken the place of the less fondly caressing windcheaters. Hardest of these perennials is the rain-repellent pigswisker, made of natural wool with the oil still in it. You can always pick a pigswisker by the pig on its label. The pig, of course, does not go out to play when it's pouring cats and dogs, and the golfer who is a real foul-weather fiend has a double-texture Grenfell-cloth jacket in the new long hip-hugging style. A button-on matching Grenfell overskirt is an optional extra which can be carried in the pocket of the golf bag. The Grenfell jacket, brightly coloured, is also suitable for ski-ing; and indeed the winter sports departments make splendid shopping

slopes for imaginative and bright-minded golfers. The ski-ing parka, for instance, is very light and easy to swing in, yet very warm and windproof: a jumper-shaped garment, in brilliant proofed cotton, with knitted yoke, collar, and cuffs. It usually has a detachable hood.

Among the ski-ing clothes, also, can be found the proofed gaberdine peaked caps which are the best winter headgear. Here, too, are the little furry ear-muffs, so grateful and comforting on the cold and windswept green. These are sufficient in themselves without a cap or hat, as the band which joins the ear-muffs keeps the hair in place. And again, it is in the winter sports department that the sweet young golfer, the doe-eyed links-minx, can confess her youth with woolly caps of every coy degree. A few such knitted nonsensicals appeared with effect at the Girls Open Championship at Beaconsfield. We are used to seeing

woolly caps in miniature replica worn by the more pampered wooden clubs lolling in their trollies . . . why should they have all the jauntiest styles?

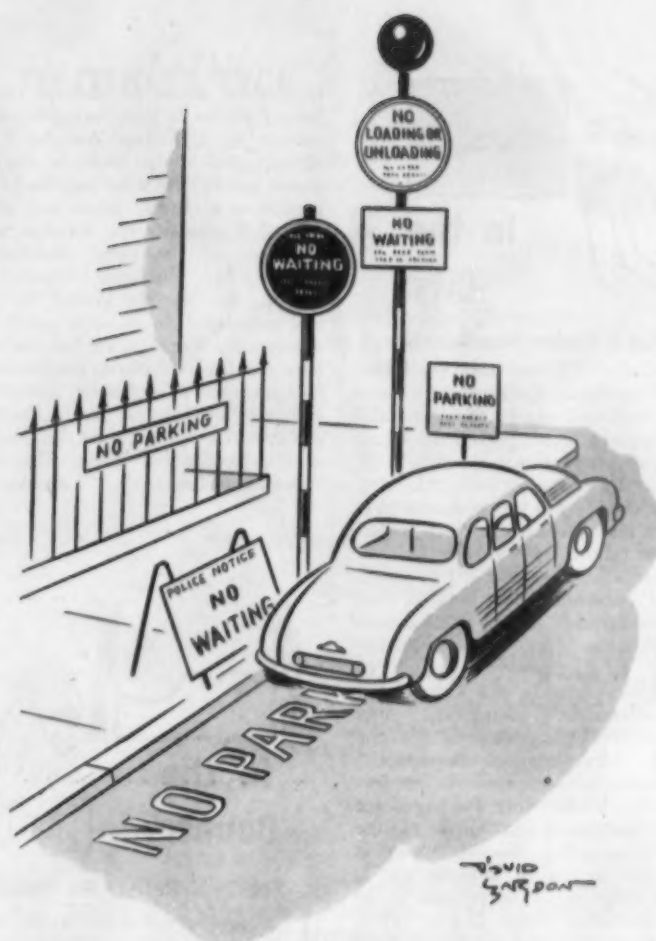
Let us, by all means, have fun as well as games. Youth will have its swing, which is just as well for the future of golf. There can be no danger of too much frivolity on the fairways, for every club has its ruling hierarchy of royal and ancients. ALISON ADBURGHAM

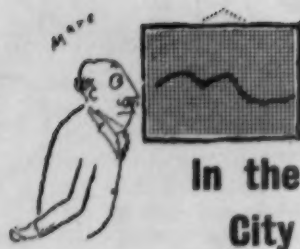
"Returning home to-day after several days in the city where he spent his youth is Mr. Leif Berg . . . of Sandnes, near Stavanger. To meet him is to recognize a man more English than the English.

At his home, only English is spoken . . . 'Even the dog barks in English,' Mr. Berg said.

Travelling on British Railways, he made some small complaint to a ticket-inspector . . . —*Birmingham Mail*

Now you've spoilt it.





To Buy a Pocket Handkercher

LANCASHIRE was once the home of Free Trade. Cobden campaigned against the corn laws; the Ramsbothams and Higginbottoms preached Adam Smith and international application of the principles of the division of labour. In those days it was inconceivable that a square inch of overseas cloth would ever dare show its warp in Britain. Well, Lancashire has changed its mind. Most of Lancashire now believes that the Government should put cotton under its wing, rescue cotton from the evils of *laissez-faire*; and much of Lancashire—certainly the Cyril Lord faction—demands complete, one hundred per cent protection for the industry. Circumstances alter cases.

Lancashire's volte-face is understandable. While other industries are cutting themselves fat slices of the domestic spending boom, cotton is threatened by rising imports and a ruinous stiffening of competition in the export markets. Since January 1955, fifty mills have closed down and about two hundred and eighty (out of 1,600) have gone on short time. The industry's labour force has shrunk to twenty-eight thousand and thousands more are ready to leave cotton as soon as alternative employment is made available. Output of yarn is down by ten per cent compared with last year, cloth by seven per cent. And this decline is but one instalment of a gradual relentless slump. In 1937 the quarterly average of piece-goods exported was 480 million square yards; this year only 150 millions.

Bitter men in Lancashire maintain that cotton is being "strangled by Whitehall"—presumably with good Manchester red tape; but it is difficult to see how Mr. Thorneycroft can relieve the pressure without damaging other sections of British industry. Cotton is already protected against foreign competition in the home market, and any interference with the reciprocal agreements which allow India and Hong Kong to ship duty-free cottons to Britain would automatically build new tariff barriers against the exports of other industries.

After the war it was hoped that Lancashire would be able to recover former glories by dominating the world market in high-class cottons. The cheaper end of the trade, it was conceded, would have to be sacrificed to the producers of India, Japan and so on.

Well, Lancashire still satisfies ninety per cent of the home demand for cottons, but duty-free imports are growing and are not always the trash that misguided propaganda would have us suppose. Far more serious, however, than this invasion of the British market is Lancashire's increasing inability to compete satisfactorily with European and American exports. As the chairman of the Cotton and Rayon Merchants' Association has said: "Lancashire is

now being beaten on price by the Belgians, the Dutch, the Germans, the Austrians, and many others."

There is no simple short-cut to recovery. The industry is still handicapped by its dark Satanic mills, by a shortage of automatic looms, an ageing labour force and union opposition to double-shift working. Lancashire is no longer entirely dependent on cotton, and the cotton industry will have to work out its own salvation while facing competition at home and abroad.

For investors the cotton industry offers high yields and some risk, and those who like both may be interested in my "four to follow"—Tootal, Whitehead, J. and P. Coats and Lancashire Cotton.

MAMMON



For This Relief, No Thanks

IF you had come to live in our parish you would have addressed the postman very formally as Mr. Annerly—at least, for the first five years. After that period of probation you would have been accepted as a resident and allowed to call him Basil. In exchange for that privilege it would have been understood that you would have a pot of tea ready whenever he delivered your letters. Gradually the arrival of the postman would have become the main event in your day, as you learnt to rely on him for either gossip or advice. Those days when you had no mail would seem empty and futile. To prevent that misfortune from re-occurring you would probably have arranged, as I did long ago, to write a regular postcard to yourself, just to ensure that Basil would call.

In spite of the refreshment he received, and every farm had something ready for him, Basil was full of complaint. To begin with, his round was a long one, at least fifteen miles, covering three hamlets and a score of outlying farms. Most of it too steep or muddy for his cycle. A pair of farm boots lasted him only six weeks in the summer, and he

wore out two pairs of Wellingtons every winter. Yet it wasn't the distance he covered every day or the monotony of his daily round which made Basil complain; it was that his work left him too exhausted to tend his garden or to do the necessary repairs to his cottage. According to the tales he told us his roof had been leaking for three years, his well was falling in, his chimney was solid with soot, and his carrots hadn't been thinned. So we all felt relieved when we knew he was to be retired.

For the next few weeks we missed Basil badly, and found the brisk new postman most unco-operative—insisting we should stamp our letters ourselves, refusing to run a weekly account for stamps, and neglecting to bring us our baccy or those similar services which we'd learned to expect from H.M. Post Office. To compensate for our loss we thought of Basil's gain, and imagined him happily repairing his thatch or weeding his neglected garden. But we were quite wrong. After forty years of work Basil was unable to enjoy his leisure. A couple of months after his retirement he broke down and began wandering about the countryside, carrying a sack containing bundles of unfranked letters. He had addressed them all himself, and stamped them too.

Here he comes again now, still wearing his uniform. I pour the tea. He hands me a letter. I pretend not to notice that the address is in his handwriting, and that the envelope is empty. Then, to maintain the convention, I ask him how his garden is, and he settles down to complain how his round keeps him from weeding his asparagus bed...

We've much in common.

RONALD DUNCAN

A Period Piece

POET:

A POET-part-Victorian
part-Topographer—that's me!
(Who was it tipped you Norman Shaw
in Nineteen Thirty-three?)
Of gas-lit Halls and Old Canals
I reverently sing,
But when Big-Chief-I-Spy comes round
I curse like anything!
Oo-oh!

PEDANT:

*A Crafty Art Historian
of Continental fame,
I'll creep up on this Amateur
and stop his little game!
With transatlantic thoroughness
I'll note down all he's missed.
Each British Brick from Norm. to Vic.
you'll find upon my list!
(Aside): (Ah-h-h!)*

POET:

I tawt I taw a Gothic arch
a-peepin' out at me.
I did, I taw a Gothic arch,
and breathed a soft: "O-gee!"

PEDANT:

(I analyzed it long ago upon the B.B.C.)

POET:

I thought I saw a Folly tall
of stucco built and thin wood
It played on my emotions
as a visit to "East Lynne" would.

PEDANT:

*(Ho-Ho, that was no Folly tall
but a Mortuary by Innwood!)*

POET:

I thought I saw a Packing Case
a-looming o'er the City.
So large and square and out of place
it filled my soul with pity.

PEDANT:

*(No doubt Advanced Headquarters
of the Barbican Committee.)*

POET:

I thought I saw a Tennis Girl
admiring a Piscina in
a Pugin Church near Holloway—
the first I'd ever seen her in.

PEDANT:

*(He did not know she was my stooge—
a highly-cultured Wienerin!)*

Contre Danse ("Summerson's icumen in").

In abidingly lyrical	} <i>Full of Danish empirical</i>	
Mildly satirical		} <i>Quite unhysterical</i>

(Rah for Sir Ninian!)

Tecton-and-Gropius—

Strict on Subtopias—

Fine Arts Commissioner's	} <i>Bauhaus Practitioner's</i>
Poetry Versed.	

Lost in a world that is all Norman Shavian
Wright, Le Corbusier, Nash and Basévi-an
Peristyle, Metope, Squinch, Architravian.

*(I was the one who discovered it
FIRST!)*

Epilogue:

All things bright and Butterfield
With Features Great and Small,
All things weird and Waterhouse
Work wonders for us all!

P. E. C.





Tu Quoque

WHAT extraordinary creatures politicians are—especially Front Bench politicians. They absorb an impression that the front benches of the House of Commons

are a sort of omphalos, or navel, of the universe and that if only they can answer a charge in such a way as to involve the opposite front bench they have answered it completely. The Prime Minister gave a perfect example of this on Tuesday when he clearly conceived that all that was required in his answer to attacks on the fourteen-day rule was to show that the opposite front bench was at least as much involved as his. But this was not the answer but the accusation—that the plan was, as Mr. GRIMOND put it, "a hole-and-corner arrangement between the parties."

Foresight Saga

The Budget debates gave us a more important and more comic example of this principle. Mr. GAITSKELL has been saying for months that Mr. BUTLER's pre-election Budget was a purely window-dressed Budget for electoral purposes, that the situation was in truth far from rosy and that a further, sterner Budget would be necessary in the autumn. Therefore, whatever the merits of the policy, Mr. GAITSKELL was for the moment right. Mr. BUTLER naturally enough—one could hardly expect otherwise—had to do the best that he could to refute the accusation. What he did in May, he argued, was well done. The situation had deteriorated through unforeseeable circumstances—strikes and the failure of the miners to produce coal. The arguments were not very convincing, for after the Government's buying of time by concessions at the beginning of the year there was nothing very surprising about strikes in the summer and nothing very surprising about the failure of coal. A prudent economist, solely concerned with economics, would have foreseen this and taken measures to discount it.

But what are so comic about politicians are their double faces. Talk to any

politician before an election in private, and he will not even bother to pretend that his main concern is not so to dress his window as to win the election. Nobody pretends that the Conservatives did not do this and nobody pretends that the Socialists would not have done if they had known how. But there is a curious convention by which in public, while you make an accusation of this sort against your opponents, you must never admit it of your own side. In public the politician must pretend that it is a monstrous and unworthy accusation and that he and his colleagues never dreamed of such a thing for a moment. Their sole concern was for the public weal. In public politics all serious suggestions are automatically dismissed as unworthy suggestions. If Paris had been a front bench politician he would have denounced, amid resounding hear-hears from his colleagues, any suggestion that he was attracted by the sex appeal of Helen as wholly unworthy of the Rt. Hon. Gentleman. All that he was concerned with was to remedy a situation that was threatening to develop in an economy that was nevertheless, unlike that of his opponents, fundamentally sound.

Mr. Gaitskell's Heel

So up to that point Mr. GAITSKELL was on a good wicket and had something to talk about, and it is so rare in this Parliament for anybody to say anything that we must be thankful for such small mercies. Indeed he did it quite well. But if Mr. GAITSKELL was the brave Achilles he too had his heel. Dividends, whatever the rights and wrongs of them, are statistically a comparatively minor factor. The reason why there is too much money chasing too few goods is that, to buy a temporary industrial peace, the Government, rightly or wrongly, has given people too much money and now has desperately to discover expedients for preventing them from spending it. But of course it would be as fatal for Mr. GAITSKELL as for Mr. BUTLER to confess that the Government had given the workers too much money. Doubtless it would be as unworthy to suggest that Mr. GAITSKELL had his eye on the

Leadership of the Labour party as it would be to suggest that Mr. BUTLER was anxious to remain Chancellor of the Exchequer. But if we could not suggest that, it was a little difficult to know what we could suggest and the House of Commons was hard put to it to fill in its two days of Budget debate.

Calloo Callay

Yet whether or not Mr. BUTLER courted popularity illegitimately in May it at any rate cannot be alleged against him that he courted it illegitimately in October. Whatever else he may have done he has at any rate slain the Jabberwock—he has cut the Butskell clean in two and restored at least a measure of reality to Parliamentary debates. Anyone who can find something on which the Socialists differ from the Conservatives deserves our gratitude. And yet at the end of it all what is going to happen? What exactly are the development plans of the nationalized industries which in the public interest are to be retarded? It is clear that he is prepared to do something drastic. Whether things go ill or things go well, the one thing that we can be certain is that a Chancellor of the Exchequer will say that drastic steps will have to be taken. But what steps is still very much anybody's guess. Like King Lear, "I will do such things—what they are yet I know not."

Stiff Upper House

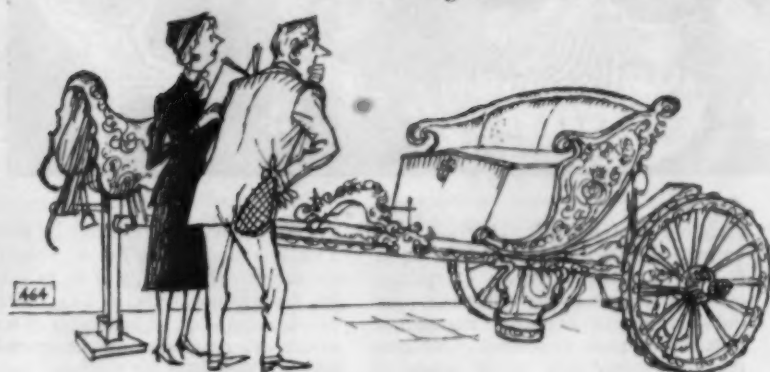
Perhaps they manage things more blandly in the House of Lords where Lord READING still maintained that, with all his Egyptian window-throwing behind him, Maclean had a wholly "satisfactory" record at the time of his appointment to the American department.

Well, well. What does it matter what politicians say?

*For things aren't half as bad as we
had feared
Since Sydney Silverman has grown
a beard.*

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

At the Royal Academy: Portuguese Art, 800-1800



Mm—no overdrive.



My dam knew Colonel Llewellyn.



That's Henry Moore, that was.



Half a mo, my wing's slipping.



I've been elected to Pop.



Norden-Manson, Jr.

What time's lunch?



527



Sir Walter sent me a box from Virginia.



BOOKING OFFICE

Anthologist

The High Hill of the Muses. Hugh Kingsmill. Eyre and Spottiswoode, 25/-

HUGH KINGSMILL's friends have, I think, succeeded in establishing him with the public as a wit, a "character" and the kindest, warmest of friends. They have not yet established him as a clearly recognizable literary figure because their familiarity with the odd shape of his mind has led them to take for granted things that need to be explained.

Chesterton's paradoxes, beeriness and Catholicism and Belloc's truculent championship of the Roman inheritance provided rough-and-ready labels, and somehow once the labelling had been done the mass of hackwork dropped out of sight, while their best books seemed to survive individually. Kingsmill had no label, Catholic or otherwise, and his range was far narrower. He lacked their professionalism, their inventiveness and their output. Moreover, he never produced memorable parerga, no *Father Brown*, no *Cautionary Tales*. However, he had a far subtler mind. Chesterton was continuously original in detail, but the main argument is simple and often repeated. In Belloc there is even less variation or development of theme. Kingsmill was no more and no less of a literary critic than Chesterton. Some of the things both of them said about writers were true and some of them had not been said before. Both lacked width of curiosity. Both were more concerned with their own thinking than with the printed page.

Kingsmill's *Biographies* start from his detecting in the subject's life some pattern suggested by his own experience. When he saw the truth about a man or a book it was hardly ever the whole truth; but it was usually the kind of truth that would have been invisible to a man who was a critic or biographer in the ordinary sense of the term. He lived detached from a good many things, including what we call "The Cultural Inheritance," and our ancestors "The

Hundred Best Books." He took what he wanted from literature and fed upon it like an artist to whom everything exists in relation to his own work. He did not believe literature imposed a duty by its mere existence. One gets the impression that whole areas of writing were completely closed to him and that he would never have thought of reading a book because it deserved to be read or of humbly and laboriously readjusting his mind to meet a new poet or a new poem.



Kingsmill was occasionally naïve but he was never hackneyed. Sometimes he was as thunderingly wrong as Johnson and he would have wanted no better model. What matters, of course, is where he was right. He had a better eye for a passage than for a whole, partly perhaps through years of impatience in reading. He thrilled to ecstasy, argument, atmosphere and any revelations, preferably unconscious, of the writer's character. He had a strong sense of some aspects of history and some aspects of psychology. He was fascinated by the gap between reality and romance, imagination and will, repute and reality. He was more interested in subjects like the relations of puritanism and the profit-motive as reflected in literature than in the sound-patterns

and association-patterns made by words. The limitations of his ear are shown in the very variable quality of his parodies. His *Carlyle on Wells*, in *The Table of Truth*, is brilliant. The targets of some of the other parodies are undetectable without the help of the heading.

This last Anthology was almost ready for publication when he died in 1949. It now appears with a short biographical note, and a lively essay on the Kingsmill Anthologies by Mr. Hesketh Pearson. The range is from Chaucer, Henryson and the Border Ballads to Wells. Remembering *The Progress of a Biographer*, one turns first to Kingsmill's own introduction, where he is at the top of his form. Like all the best of his writing it is primarily autobiographical. It is a brisk trot through English—and in some sentences world—literature; cheery, frank and provocative, full of insights and gay felicities. The Anthology is not a selection based on a class-list, like *The Golden Treasury* or the *Oxford Books*, or one based on subject-matter, like Kingsmill's own *Invective and Abuse*. It is simply one man's response to literature, the raw material of a point of view and, as it was an odd point of view, it is a very odd anthology; but it is not a purposeless or an indiscriminating one. I can imagine its fascination growing while less personal anthologies become superseded with each change of critical climate.

There are one hundred and twenty-seven pages of Shakespeare, sixty pages of Wordsworth, three and a half of Pope and half a page of Swinburne. Most of the authors represented are the usual ones, though the selection from them is generally unexpected. Because Kingsmill grew up under the shadows of the Jungfrau and of his father, Sir Henry Lunn, there is a section on Switzerland in Victorian literature, with the characteristic remark in the introduction that to the Victorians Switzerland was a paradise without hours. There is very little one would want omitted from the Anthology, though much one would like included. Kingsmill was, again like Chesterton, stronger

in his affirmation than his negations. What journals he might have left if hackwork had not drained his energy, though it never blunted his mind.

R. G. G. PRICE

Early Light: The Collected Poems of Dorothy Wellesley. Hart-Davis, 21/-

"Not enough death-wish," complained a critic of someone, but not presumably of Dorothy Wellesley, torn between back-to-the-womb and forward-to-the-tomb instincts; even her extraordinary individual rhythm, mainly very heavily-supported regular blank verse, reads like a knell. Her results are hit or miss; for instance the famous *Horses* and the less well-known *Snakes* are very successful, but some of their companion pieces, constructed in almost the same way, are yet no more than catalogues, each line a deeper nodding of the head. Her occasional more buoyant moods produce some pleasant poems. It is interesting that in the poem called *Lenin*

And I said

"Much writing these delicate hands have done."

has become between 1934 and now

And I said

"Many warrants these delicate hands have signed."

P. D.

The Flowers of the Forest. David Garnett. Chatto and Windus, 21/-

Mr. David Garnett's second volume of autobiography deals with his life from the outbreak of war in 1914 to the beginning of 1923. Although, perhaps inevitably, rather less coherent in form than its predecessor, *The Golden Echo*, the

author's particular blend of geniality and malice conveys in a most lively manner the life lived by himself and his friends. For those interested in "Bleakwater" it is essential. The last volume ended with Maynard Keynes's dictum that the war, economically speaking, could only last a few months; and here we have an eyewitness account of Bleakwater at war.

Mr. Garnett was at first divided between enlistment and conscientious objection, but finally plumped for the latter. The book makes one feel that the Bleakwaters have, on the whole, not stood up well, individually, to the test of time. The major figures of the period now seem outside the group. Bleakwater supplied only the Second Eleven. Was their self-righteousness and intellectual arrogance justified, either by their personal behaviour or their contribution to art and letters? There is an attractive three-quarter-length portrait here of Francis Birrell. In the Registrar's Office where Mr. Garnett was married there was a notice: "Under the Defence of the Realm Act it is forbidden to throw confetti in this building." A. P.

The Doves of Venus. Olivia Manning. Heinemann, 13/6

Visual sensitivity, the ability to find a metaphor for the appearance of a June sky or a pond in a wintry park, often seems in novelists to be a separate and superior faculty. Novels of rather humdrum plot and characterization will suddenly shoot up out of their class with a landscape as delicately vivid as a fan painting.

Ellie goes to London from the dreary provinces to be an artist. She makes friends with a posh girl who takes her to visit a rich uncle in a country mansion, where she keeps her end up by wine talk learned from a rather cynical middle-aged roué with whom she is dreadfully in love. The roué's wife wanders squalidly from man to man: she represents that modish target, the gin-and-art progressives of the 'thirties who are unable to adjust themselves to the vital, positive young. Ellie enjoys a happy ending with a silent young man she finds has been there for some time. An unpretentiously agreeable example of "the nice book for ladies," with some patches of admirable descriptive writing.

R. G. G. P.

Boswell on the Grand Tour. Edited by Frank Brady and Frederick A. Pottle. Heinemann, 25/-

In this further volume of the Boswell papers the period covered is 1765-1766, and the places Italy, Corsica and France. Having persuaded his father to allow him to go abroad, and supply the money for the trip, Boswell was determined to make the most of it. The first half of these Italian adventures is a little slow, but gradually Boswell's extraordinary power of revealing his own character carries the reader away. He was a great neurotic; and he knew it. His charm is in the fact



"When I said I wished you were more like Dr. Albert Schweitzer I meant in spirit."

that so often he is the type-man of whatever he sets out to do.

His futilities and extravagances in attacking the opposite sex are a monument to all behaviour of that sort; again his enthusiasm and sentimentality about Corsica provide an example, for all time, of the particular kind of political romanticism that concentrates on a certain race and decides that race can do no wrong. Boswell's genius seems to rest on three things: first, he had the necessary experiences; second, he wrote about them without concealing anything; third, he was somehow lacking in affectation, or a certain sort of self-consciousness, which makes his experiences vividly real to others. His odious cruelty to his dog is a good example of his recurrent neuroticism.

A. P.

AT THE PLAY

The Queen and the Rebels (HAYMARKET)

CONVENTIONALLY, the dénouement of a detective play is withheld by the critic; then, when his reader turns playgoer the fun remains unspoiled. Should not the same reticence be accorded the inner turns of plot which lend life and movement to the play of more than a single idea? The playwright has sown his seeds of dramatic surprise with tender care, and nourished them with heaven knows what expenditure of intellectual fertilizer; it seems a pity that they should wither in the first cold blast of print. Several notices of Mr. UGO BETTI's play at the Haymarket knocked the props from under at least half of it by unfeeling disclosures, which means that to theatre-goers who read critics (and in the circumstances no one could blame them if they didn't) the play must come in a damaged state.

Luckily, in *The Queen and the Rebels*, the plot is not all. The play is political-revolutionary in texture, and unfolds in a lusty, rolling translation by Mr. HENRY REED. It is full of thought which, if not



"The governors would be grateful, Padre, if this Christmas you could omit all that sensational stuff about the Massacre of the Innocents."

From *Tableaux Vivants*, by Osbert Lancaster. Gryphon Books 4s. 6d.

quite as profound as either playwright or players would have us think, at least dresses some familiar political truths in new and exciting clothes. Within its ideological context it has no major lesson to teach us, except perhaps to confirm a suspicion that there is no humour in the revolutionary heart, and that satirical sallies under interrogation will misfire badly and only lead to trouble. Sometimes Mr. BETTI gets a little swept away with his own word power and his long duologues come near to exhausting their fuel, but his images are bright and his periods round, so that even then we are content to ride along on the language alone.

His feeling for character is keen, and is supported by his appreciation of the actor as an instrument. The play affords at least two opportunities for acting performances of an uninhibited kind too rare to-day. These opportunities are firmly and eagerly seized; by Mr. LEO MCKERN, who has that quality on the stage for which perhaps Quality is the only word, so that he has merely to take a step or point a finger and the implications fly out at us like locusts. And by Miss IRENE WORTH, whose triumphant evening, after all, it really is.

The action is virtually continuous. This means that Miss WORTH must convince us that a woman can become transfigured from a harlot and worse to a heroine and better in the course of two hours' living-time. It is impossible to say how difficult this is until we have seen another actress try it. Miss WORTH gives us no chance to consider the magnitude of her task, but instead presents an unchallengeable reality: her Argia says this, does that,

and we accept; the questions of would she or could she, never enter into it. The pouts and struttings, the sleazy posings of the early scenes modulate by the finest of gradations into the later radiance and nobility, and yet mysteriously leave her the same woman always, with certain constants of character—chiefly a kind of wearily humorous philosophy—unimpaired.

Besides an Argia defying common classification, Mr. BETTI provides two interesting contrasts in members of a totalitarian ruling class: the Commissar of Mr. MCKERN (nationalities are left an accommodating blank), ice-cold, intelligent and dedicated, and Mr. DUNCAN LAMONT's well-drawn Raim, loose, stupid and self-seeking. There is, however, a small flaw in the Commissar at the very end of the evening. For the sake of a final curtain, admittedly of sound dramatic effect, a sentimental moment creeps in. Mr. FRANK HAUSER's direction has pace, sharpness and intelligence.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

At the Apollo AMBROSINE PHILLPOTTS delights in *Lucky Strike* (21/9/55); possibly forgotten but by no means gone, the evergreen *Salad Days* (Vaudeville—18/8/54); for Eastern colour and spectacle with ALFRED DRAKE firmly in command, *Kismet* (Stoll—27/4/55).

J. B. BOOTHROYD

At the DUKE OF YORK'S:
The Punch Revue, with BINNIE
HALE, produced by VIDA HOPE.

AT THE CHINESE THEATRE



*Classical Theatre of the People's
Republic of China (PALACE)*

PLEASURES of recognition are abundant at the Palace Theatre. It is fun to see on the stage Chinese brigands and princes and warriors who look just as they used to in nursery story-books, and that Chinese music is just what we have hummed from *The Mikado* and *San Toy*. But we are not prepared for the marvellous dancing which pervades everything this talented company does, whether it be comedy, melodrama or fantasy.

The recent visit of the Kabuki dancers and musicians from Japan opened our eyes to the fascinating precision of Oriental mime and stage movement. The Chinese performers are no less precise but they are freer and more exuberant; much more rollicking in what might be called a slapstick tradition. But it is in their seemingly artless romping that the exact timing leaves one breathless.

Above all, the Chinese theatre is a Feast of Light, with never a shadow or pool of darkness to obscure the expression of the actors and dancers' faces, or the bright colours of the scene. The item with which the programme opens—not surpassed thereafter—is a highly comic episode from a mediaeval folk-play supposed to be enacted in pitch darkness. Three men, each suspecting the others of murderous intent, are groping fearfully. It is all



A Young Peasant—ANGELA LLOYD

The Traveller—LEO MCKERN

Argia—IRENE WORTH

(*The Queen and the Rats*)

done on a brilliantly lighted stage and is in all essentials a ballet of mime and patterns of movement with superbly timed moments of dramatic suspense. (It was odd to reflect that across the river, at the Old Vic, *Julius Caesar* was being performed under a jet black sky with noble senators literally groping in the darkness of inky noon to reach a spotlight's beam.)

Acrobatic dancing and unforeseen antics which, like the swordplay, are judged to a hair's breadth, are the staple of the stage action. Evidently the choice of items has been for the avoidance of dialogue and the appeal is almost entirely to the eye. In that appeal a truly splendid element is the sumptuous costumes in which, oddly enough, the ladies of the company have small share. Indeed, the ladies are altogether subordinate throughout, their only moment of independence of male dominance being when they move about the stage, in a dance rhythm, as though on castors and without visible effort.

MILES MALLESON, pretending not to be a highly accomplished actor, or, perhaps, playing the part of a benign and avuncular chairman, notes in hand, introduces the items with charmingly inexpert explanations. No compère could better heighten contrast between East and West.

Obviously we are not offered the subtleties of the Chinese theatre. For us it is a spectacle of ancient merriment and brilliant virtuosity meet for our intelligence. C. B. MORTLOCK



AT THE PICTURES

Joe Macbeth—Tiger in the Sky

THE trouble with *Joe Macbeth* (Director: KEN HUGHES)—which I must nevertheless say I enjoyed—is that it can't, by its very nature, be taken seriously. As you are undoubtedly aware, this is an ingenious re-telling in modern terms of Shakespeare's tragedy; and the trouble with any such enterprise is that for some mysterious reason the closer and more cleverly contrived the parallel the more nearly the effect becomes comic. One can't take the thing on the surface: the whole aim is that one shouldn't; but the sheer process of noticing resemblances, detecting references, recognizing the equivalents of characters—above all, catching the echoes in the characters' names—tends somehow to raise a smile.

I'm not overlooking the scenes here that are candidly meant to amuse amid the carnage, in the best Shakespearean manner. All I suggest is that it is as nearly as possible hopeless to try to put over any feeling of tragedy or even any emotional effect in the same breath, as it were, as what amounts to a puzzle. One demands emotional absorption, the other intellectual detachment; you can't have it both ways.

However, as I say, I enjoyed the

SHERIFFS



Joe Macbeth—PAUL DOUGLAS
Lily Macbeth—RUTH ROMAN

Bill Shakespeare—An Apparition

[Joe Macbeth

picture: it is consistently interesting and entertaining, and unpretentiously well done. PAUL DOUGLAS makes *Joe Macbeth* the gang leader a more bumbling and plaintive character than the original, so that occasionally his domestic scenes with the dominating *Lily Macbeth* (RUTH ROMAN) come perilously close to suggesting the comic henpecked-husband situation; but Miss ROMAN is as cobra-like and menacing as one could wish, and the gang warfare and violently-resolved intrigues for leadership in the underworld of an imaginary American city remarkably well represent the interminable fighting in eleventh-century Scotland. One radical difficulty, of course, is the utter absence of any trouble with the police: there's nothing in the original that could represent the forces of law and order, and so they have to be ignored. But except for people for whom probability is all-important, this is a detail. As a whole, partly as a clever bit of film-making, partly as a brisk narrative of action, partly as an amusing exercise, the film is enjoyable.

Much the best of *Tiger in the Sky* (Director: GORDON DOUGLAS) is visual: the CinemaScope and WarnerColor pictures of flying. As a story, it is in that uneasy category of biographies of real people who are still alive or only very recently dead. The subject here is Joseph McConnell, Jr., a celebrated American flying ace, and apart from the air episodes (which include what appear to be genuine shots of bombing raids in the last war) the film has not very much more to make a story of than fairly conventional Army humours, happy domesticity, and the repeated situation of the dangerously-living husband and the worrying wife.

Such individuality as McConnell

(ALAN LADD) is allowed, apart from the customary qualities of a red-blooded American, rests on his passion for flying. In the early Army scenes we get the boredom at medical-corps lectures, the constant pursuit by dour military police (when he sneaks off to spend his pay on flying lessons), the exasperated comic sergeant, the punishment fatigues, and so forth; in the domestic scenes there is JUNE ALLYSON as the starry-eyed wife. Having spent much of the 1939 war unwillingly as a navigator ("I want to be a guy at the controls, not a star-gazer") he becomes a pilot, and in the Korean war does spectacularly well. Finally he loses his life testing a new jet plane. The publicity sums up the film by saying "jet planes and ground kisses divide the footage," which seems as good a description as any; let's leave it at that.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Also new in London—an Italian collection of five stories, *Tempi Nostri*, or *A Slice of Life*, not outstanding but with excellent bits; and *SARTRE'S La P... Respectueuse*, a rather crudely anti-American work showing a good deal of misdirected ability. Otherwise—apart from mere enjoyable time-killing entertainment, like the musical *It's Always Fair Weather* (26/10/55) and a hilarious new comedy, *How to Be Very, Very Popular*—there are the old faithfuls: *French Cancan* (7/9/55) and *Rififi* (13/7/55).

Releases include *Touch and Go* (12/10/55), a pleasant little everyday-fun British comedy; *Pete Kelly's Blues* (5/10/55), a good period piece (1927 gangsters and jazz); and *The Trouble Shooter*, a good Western.

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR

Laff-Stuff

TWO months ago, when full-page advertisements were describing the treats that I.T.A. had in store for us, it seemed pretty certain that the B.B.C.'s department of risibility would have to shut up shop. How, we wondered, could it possibly compete with the wealth of talent assembled by the programme contractors, with the big names, the giant stars and galaxies lined up, signed up and rarin' to go! In my innocence I imagined a nightly splurge of rib-tickling variety, a feast of laughter and glamour. I awaited wisecracks galore, split-second clowning, all the drollery of night-club sophisticates.

I am still waiting. So far I.T.A. has given us very little live humour: plenty of American comedy films, plenty of give-away programmes, but only a hint of the top-class variety that was promised. Harry Secombe and Reg Dixon (both ex-B.B.C.) have cavorted pleasantly enough, Norman Wisdom and Tommy Trinder have tripped through their party pieces, and . . . well, the rest of the funsters hardly deserve a mention. Commercial humour is queer stuff. In half a dozen programmes every week we are invited to laugh at other people's discomforts. Respectable citizens, members of the studio audience, are dressed up in baby-clothes, ducked, tripped and made to look thoroughly oafish and unhappy. And then, when sadism has had its run and the least sensitive of viewers are beginning to experience shame, down comes the healing balm. "A big hand, ladies and gentlemen, for a real sport! And now here's his reward—a fine brand-new ejector-type electric toaster!"



The sixty-four-dollar question.

Deafening applause as the victim totters away with his hush-money.

Audience participation with a vengeance.

The B.B.C. gave us parlour games out of season and in sickening succession: I.T.A. is reviving the worst features of the old-style university rag, the chuckling bullies and licensed nuisances.

TV comics have to be exceptionally bright and well-scripted to stay the pace of a weekly or fortnightly series. What usually happens is that the programmes begin well enough and rapidly fizzle out as inspiration flags. The gags and gimmicks that won laughs in the first programme become the prototypes for a succession of adaptations, each one operating under the law of diminishing returns until gratification is replaced by tedium and, eventually, nausea. But there are exceptions to this rule. Eric Sykes, who writes the I.T.A. "Saturday Showtime" programmes, manages to supply Harry Secombe with strong and

original material week after week, with the result that the series continues to entertain. I particularly commend his elaborate charades—something quite new in televised entertainment—in which the mannerisms of stick-dancers, formation-dancers, guardsmen, professional strong men and others are burlesqued with precision and poker-faced concentration.

Lime Grove's current comedy series—"Great Scott It's Maynard," "Fast and Loose" (Monkhouse and Goodwin) and "The Charlie Chester Show"—all seem rather dull and old hat by comparison.

Last week I gave a coolish reception to the B.B.C. play cycle *The Makepeace Story*, by Frank and Vincent Tilsley.

I found the first quadrant stiff and text-bookish, and feared that worse was to follow. The second instalment, however, made excellent viewing. The Tilsleys were now into their stride and the pace had quickened. *A New Generation* carried the story of cotton to the mid-nineteenth century and Chartism and laced into it all the ingredients of successful melodrama—a moving liaison between mill-girl and maister's son, rib-bashing hooligans and bomb-plots. This play held the attention throughout—even when the strange funeral procession (on film, of course) moved at the speed of an early Mack Sennett comedy.

Two years ago *The Quatermass Experiment*, a television serial, delighted the science fiction addicts and horrified thousands of gullible viewers—and was therefore an immense success. Now we have its successor, *Quatermass II*, and on the evidence of episode No. 1 this too should make the flesh creep.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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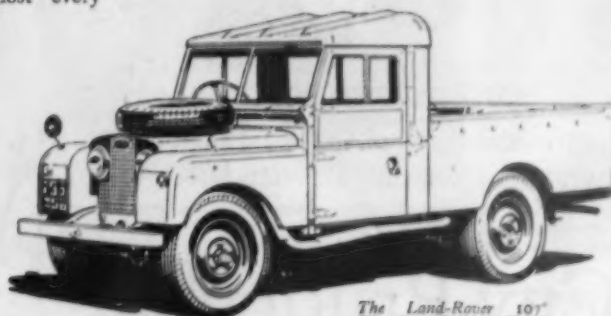
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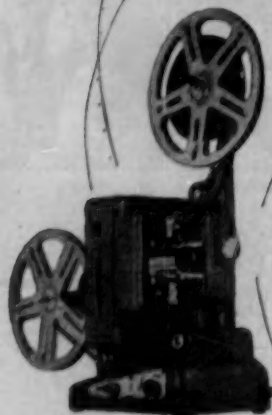
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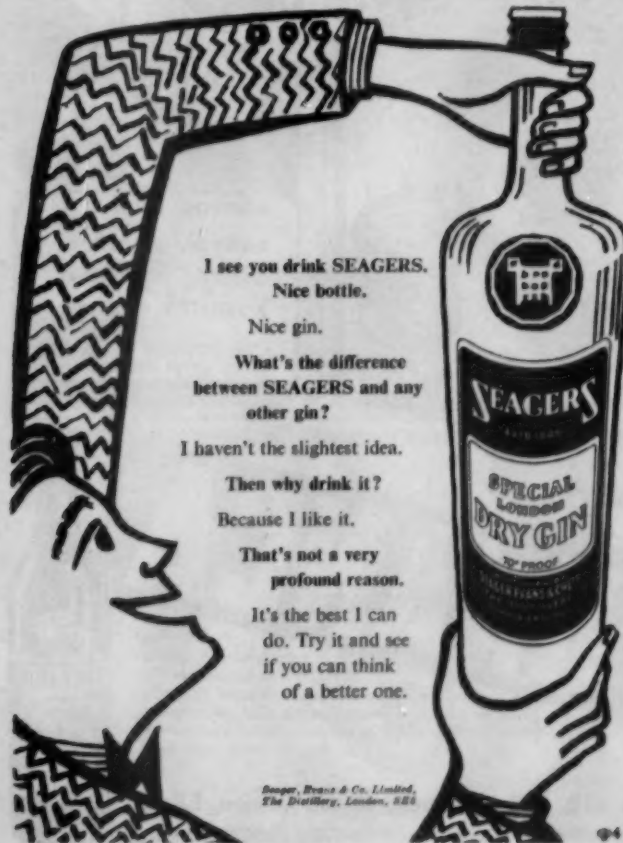
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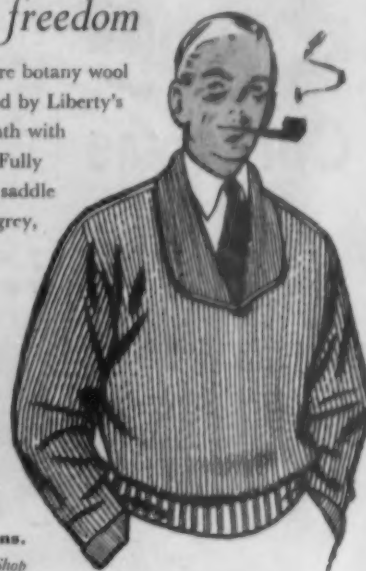
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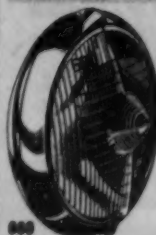
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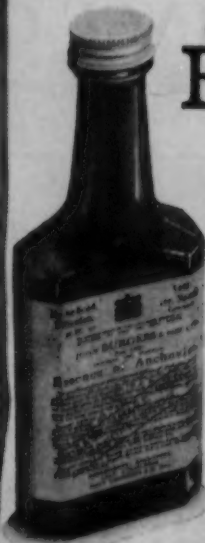
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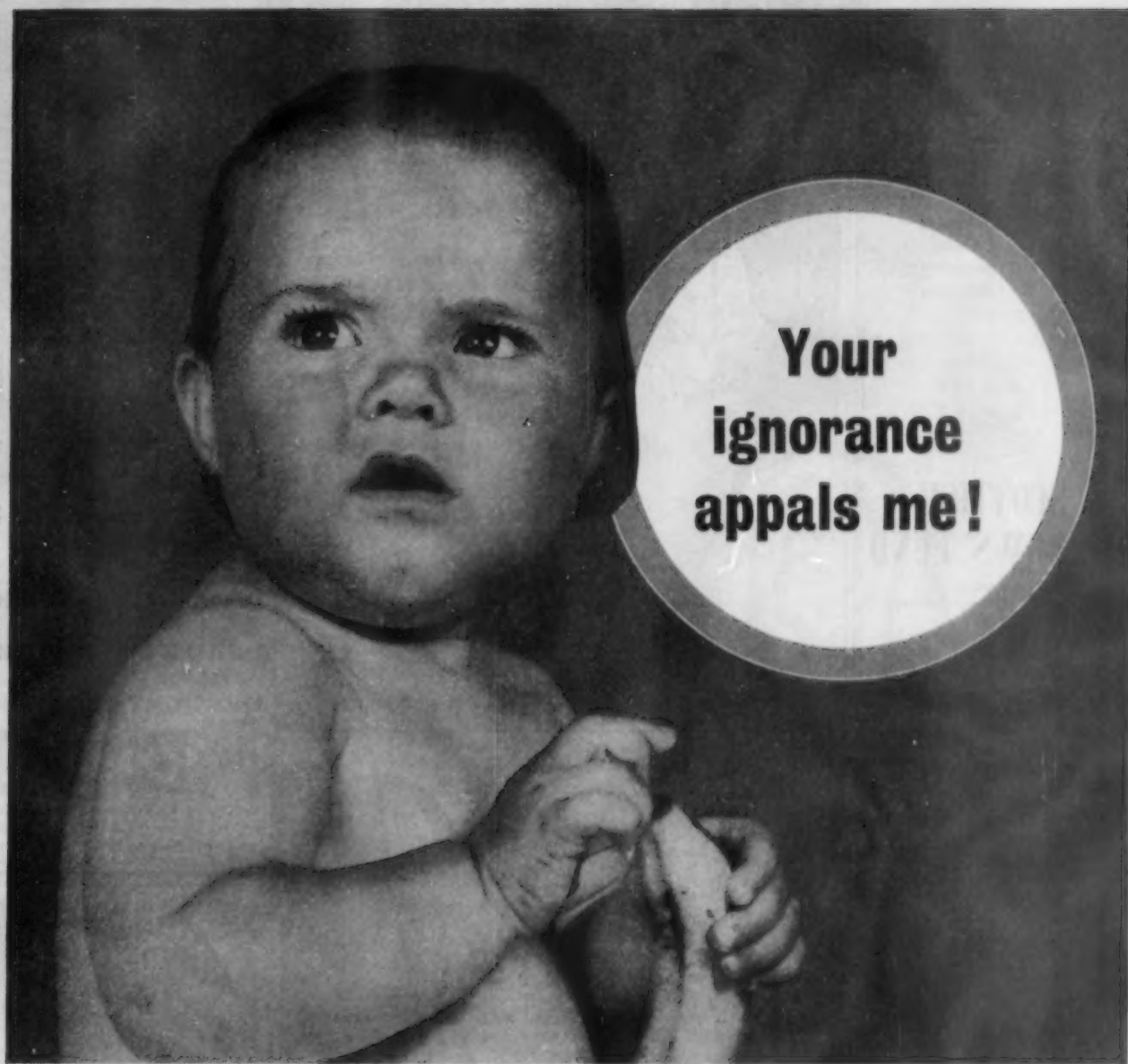
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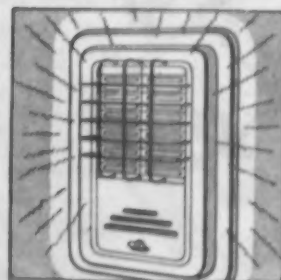
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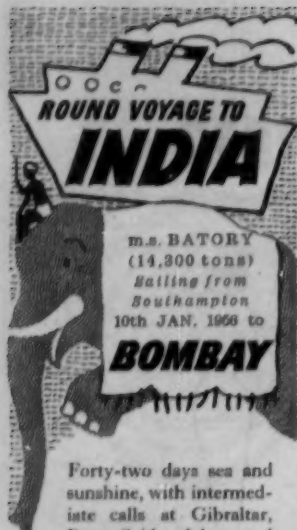
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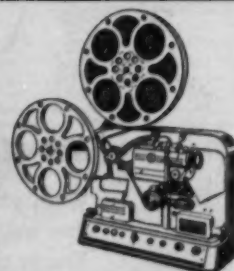
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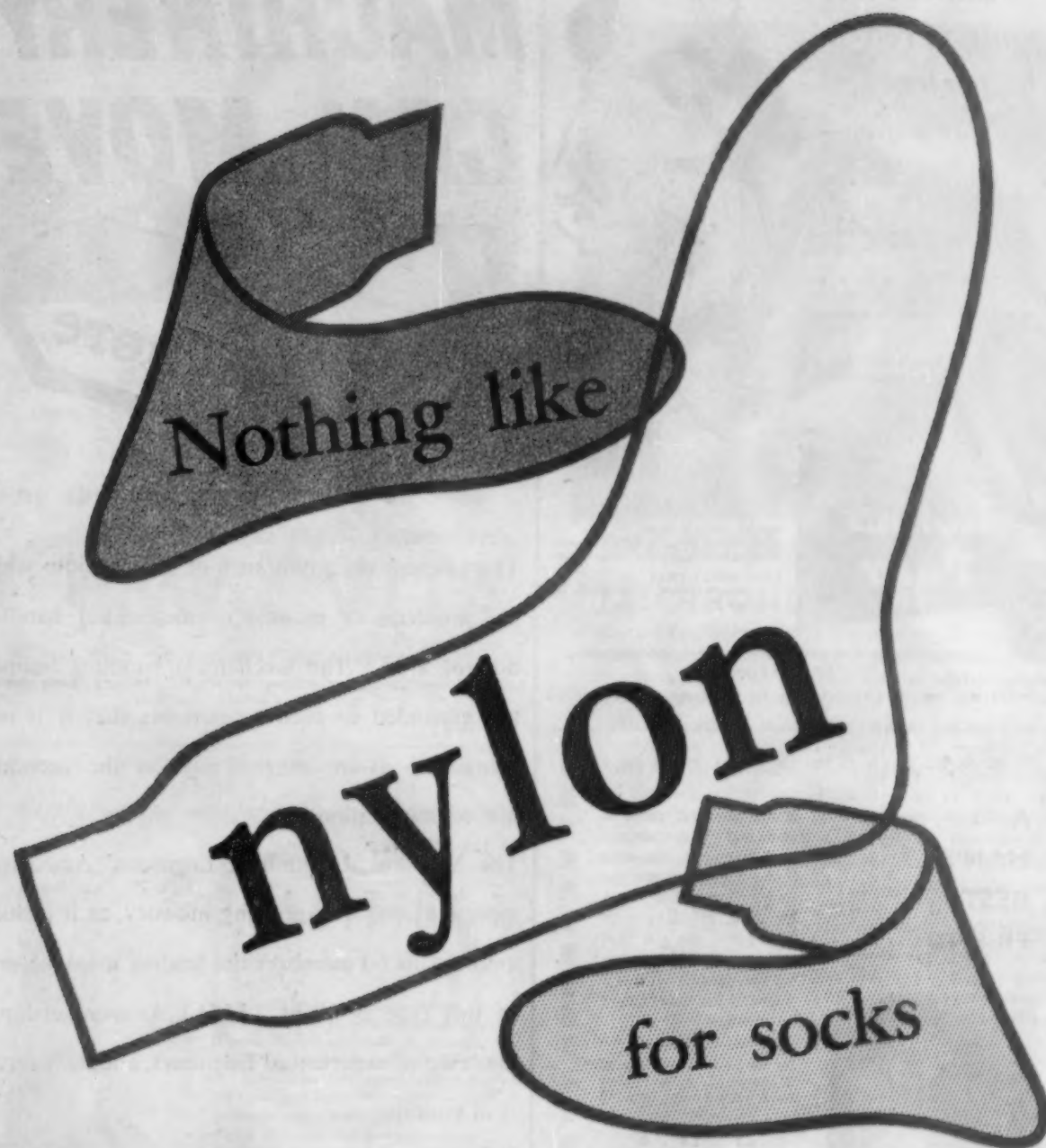
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